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SELF-MURTHER

AND

1385 d. 5

DUELLING

The Effects of

Cowardice and *Atheism.*

To which are Added,

Some Reflections on the Modern Practice of INOCULATION.

Proxima deinde tenent mœsti loca, qui sibi lethum
Insontes peperere manu, lucemque perosi
Projecere animas. Quam vellent æthere in alto
Nunc & pauperiem & duros perferre labores!
Fata obstant — — — — Virg. Æn. 6.
— — — — — — Minuti
Semper & infirmi est animi exiguique voluptas
Ultio. Continuò sic collige, quòd vindictâ
Nemo magis gaudet quàm Fœmina. — Juv. Sat. 13.
Funeris heu tibi causa fui! Virg.

LONDON,
Printed for R. WILKIN, at the *King's Head* in St. *Paul's* Church-Yard. MDCCXXVIII.

Price One Shilling.

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Self-Murther the Effect of Cowardice and Atheiſm.

IS obvious, but melancholy to obſerve, that there are more frequent Inſtances of *Self-Murther* and *Duelling* among Modern Chriſtians, than are to be found among the Antient Heathens; more in this Proteſtant Kingdom than in any other Part of Chriſtendom beſide; and more again, within theſe few Years laſt paſt, than ever were known before. And ſurely, it can't but affect every ſerious and ſenſible Perſon, that has any Tenderneſs of Nature, any Bowels of Compaſſion for his Fellow-Creatures, his Fellow-Subjects, his Fellow-Chriſtians, to ſee ſo many precious Lives thrown away, and made a Sacrifice to ſome of the meaneſt Vices and Paſſions that belong to Human Nature, *viz.* the Rage of Reſentment, a cloudy Diſcontent, and a profane Tempting and Diſtruſting of Providence.

To enquire into all the particular Cauſes of theſe growing Enormities, would not be conſiſtent with my intended Brevity: To paſs by any material one without Animadverſion, may be of ſome diſadvantage to my general Deſign, *viz.* of Inodiating and Diſcountenancing, as far as a mean Pamphlet is capable of doing, theſe vile and abominable Practices, that ought not ſo much as to be nam'd or heard of among Chriſtians. I ſhall therefore, by way of Introduction, make a few curſory Remarks on ſome of the more remote and diſtant Cauſes of theſe great Evils, and then proceed to the Two Principal Ones, that may be reckon'd the next and immediate Parents of them. And,

Firſt, With reſpect to *Self-Murther*, a general Opinion has of late Years much obtain'd, that whoever is guilty of this Fact, muſt of courſe be Lunatick, or *Non-compos*, ſince no Man in his right Senſes, (as ſome affirm) can ever be ſuppos'd willing, or capable of laying violent Hands upon himſelf: And all Juries now-a-days are govern'd in a manner, by this erroneous and ill-grounded Suppoſition, and bring in their Verdict accordingly, whether any previous Symptoms of Lunacy or Diſtraction were ever diſcover'd upon the Perſon or not. I don't deny, but that if a Man had been known to be diſtracted, or out of his Senſes but once in his whole Life, 'tis foundation enough for a charitable or favourable Verdict. Not but that the Perſon who kills himſelf when *Non-compos*, may be guilty before God, of wilful Murther. We commonly ſay, and very truly, that the Cauſe of the

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Cauſe, is the Cauſe of the Effect, or thing caus'd. We are anſwerable for the Effects, when we are the Authors of the Cauſe of them. And therefore if a high Diſcontent at the Ways of Providence ſhall at length deprive a Man (which is no unuſual thing) of the right uſe of his Senſes and Reaſon, and if in this State of mental Incapacity he deſtroys himſelf, he is accountable before God as well for the Effect as for the Cauſe *. However, we are ſtill to obſerve, that a Jury has nothing to do with the Cauſes or Grounds of Lunacy (which are generally unknown to Men.) 'Tis ſufficient to acquit them to God and the World, if the Perſon they bring in Lunatick, appears to have been ſo any time before. But then, to ſuppoſe, as is the preſent Caſe, that all *Self-Murther* is the Effect of Lunacy or Diſtraction, is to ſuperſede the Deſign and Neceſſity of Juries on this occaſion, and to impeach the Wiſdom of former Parliaments, and of the preſent likewiſe, who have left the old Laws in relation to *Self-Murther* unrepeal'd. And tho' theſe are now grown Obſolete with many, and are utterly diſregarded; yet they are certainly very wholſome, merciful and prudent Laws, deſign'd to brand the Memory of the Self-Murtherer, to fix a Mark of Infamy upon him, and entail that Part of

* N.B. *'Tis very ſeldom known, I believe, that Perſons in a feveriſh* Delirium, *or under a real Diſtraction, (as thoſe in* Bethlehem-Hoſpital) *make any Attempt to deſtroy themſelves: And why Lunacy (if that were the only Caſe) ſhould not produce the ſame fatal Effects in Theſe, as 'tis ſuppoſed to do in Self-Murtherers, is hard to conceive.*

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the Puniſhment, which he hath put himſelf out of the reach of, upon his unhappy Poſterity, in order to deter others from the like inhuman and deteſtable Practices. But to what purpoſe is all this, if there can be no Crime in *Self-Murther*, as the preſent general Suppoſition ſeems to imply? Certainly, if this Age may be charg'd with Exceſs of Charity in any one Inſtance, it muſt be in this: I call it an Exceſs, or Abuſe of Charity; becauſe from a dangerous Miſtake, and effeminate Weakneſs, it tends not to ſave, but to deſtroy Mens Lives. For I appeal to all Mankind, whether when the Laws in this Caſe were ſometimes put in Execution, there were not abundantly fewer Examples of this kind, than there are at preſent.

But *2dly*, The too common Inſtances of *Suicide* now-a-days may perhaps more juſtly be charg'd upon the late fatal Execution of the S. S. Scheme, which has reduc'd ſo many from a State of Affluence, to a State of Penury. And indeed, 'tis very remarkable, that the Inſtances of *Suicide* are ſince that time wonderfully increas'd upon us. In confirmation of this mournful Remark, thoſe who have better Opportunity than I have, may, from the Bills of Mortality before and ſince the S. S. Scheme, eaſily calculate the Difference in this reſpect. I ſhall only here, for a Specimen, take notice of the only two Years that are yet come to my knowledge. Now, the Account (as I have it) from *Dec.* 10, 1723, to *Dec.* 15, 1724, with relation to the matter in hand, ſtands thus: ------*Made away with themſelves* 38, *Drown'd* 83, *Found dead*

15.

15. In the General Bill of Mortality, from *Dec.* 1724, to *Dec.* 1725, we are told, that 59 made away with themselves, that 74 were drown'd, and that 43 were found dead. How many under the two last Articles of each Year, were accessory to their own Death, is not to be determin'd; but that some, at least, under each, were of that Number, is scarce to be doubted. However, should we strike these two last quite out of the List, either of the separate foregoing Numbers will, I believe, be found greatly to exceed any Number of Self-Murtherers that has ever happen'd in any one Year before the ever-memorable 1720.

Thirdly, Those Authors who have wrote either directly or indirectly in favour of *Self-Murther*, have (as 'tis to be fear'd) contributed not a little to the Frequency of this horrid Fact. Among the latter, I am sorry that I'm oblig'd to place the ingenious Author of the celebrated Play call'd *Cato*; who makes his Hero speak thus temptingly and unconcernedly of *Self-Destruction*, and thus presumptuously of its fatal Consequences.

Lu. Cato, *'tis time thou save thy self and us.*
Cato. *Lose not a Thought on me.* I'm out of danger.
Heav'n *will not leave me in the Victor's Hand.*
Cæsar *shall never say, I conquer'd* Cato.

The Conqueror draws near. Once more, Farewel!
If e'er we meet hereafter, we shall meet

In

In happier Climes, and on a safer Shore,
Where Cæsar never shall approach us more.

Such fine Touches as these coming from so celebrated a Pen, at once ravish the Fancy, steal away the Judgment, and take off all Horror of the ghastly Fact; and from being so pleasing in the Theory, come at last, under some trying Exigency, to gain the Assent of the Will, and to lead Men insensibly into Practice. So dangerous is it to speak plausibly of any Vice, to disguise the Odiousness of any foul Enormity, and by Painting and false Poetry to make it appear lovely and desirable. But that I may not be thought too rash in my Censure, or too severe upon the Author, let the Reader only peruse the commendatory Poems before the Play, and see there how some of the Poet's Friends and Admirers have enlarg'd and improv'd upon him in this Particular, and not blush'd to single out for their highest Encomium, what, in the Judgment of all wise and good Men, must appear to be the greatest Blemish in the Conduct and Character of that illustrious Heathen. But perhaps, these, as well as the Author, have suffer'd their better Judgment to be led aside, by their too great and implicit Veneration for Classical Writers, those blind Guides in moral Duties, that often run counter (as they evidently do in the present Case) to the Dictates of Natural as well as Reveal'd Religion. The Lyric Poet (but we must make allowance for Poetical Flights) represents *Cato* as the most invincible Hero upon

upon Earth; becauſe he would not ſuffer any to conquer him —— but himſelf *. *Florus*, the *Latin* Hiſtorian endeavours, with great Simplicity, to ſet forth *Cato*'s *Suicide* as a very wiſe and worthy Action †. *Valerius Maximus* ſpeaks likewiſe on this occaſion, in the uſual Strain of the Times ‡; but his ſeemingly elegant Turn of Words will not atone for his manifeſt Deficiency in Truth and Senſe; unleſs it muſt paſs for a Rule, that no Man ought to live, or can at leaſt live with Dignity, under the Government of a proſperous Uſurper. The Heathen Moraliſt, in his Treatiſe of *Morality* ſeems willing too to give into the general Commendation of this miſtaken Great Man, as judging it more eligible for *Cato* to kill himſelf, than to behold the Face of his Conqueror ||. But the reaſons he gives for his partial Opinion, are too weak and trifling to deſerve an Anſwer §. 'Tis no wonder, indeed, that thoſe who knew no better,

* Et cuncta terrarum ſubacta, præter atrocem animum Catonis. *Hor. L.* 2. *Od.* 1.

† Cato non interfuit bello —— ſed acceptâ partium clade, nihil cunctatus, ut ſapiente dignum erat, mortem etiam lætus accivit. *L. Flor. l.* 4.

‡ Tui quoque clariſſimi exceſſus, Cato, Utica monumentum eſt, in quâ ex fortiſſimis vulneribus tuis plus gloriæ quam ſanguinis manavit. Siquidem conſtantiſſimè in gladium incumbendo, magnum hominibus documentum dediſti, quanto potior eſſe debeat probis Dignitas ſine Vitâ, quam Vita ſine Dignitate. *Valer. Max. l.* 3. *de Fortitud.*

|| Moribundus potius, quam tyranni vultus adſpiciendus fuit. *Cic. de Offic. l.* 1.

§ Cæteris forſitan vitio datum eſſet, ſi ſe interemiſſent, propterea quod eorum vita lenior, & mores fuerant faciliores;

applauded and extoll'd ſuch an Action. For 'twas a ſettled Principle with them, that 'tis not only lawful, but even requiſite, on ſome Occaſions, for a Man to diſpatch himſelf *. And this we find a prevailing Notion among the *Romans*, even in the Days of the Younger *Pliny*; who bewailing his own Loſs, occaſion'd by the voluntary Death of his Friend *Corellius*, is ſo far, however, from apologizing for the untimely *Exit*, that he makes no ſcruple to aſſert that his Friend was acted by the higheſt Reaſon in what he did †: And yet this higheſt Reaſon of his was no other than a long Conflict with the Paroxyſms of the Gout ‡ which, it ſeems, he was reſolv'd to bear no longer. And truly, if we examine all the Heathen Examples of *Suicide*, we ſhall find, that moſt of them were owing to a wretched Impatience, or ſullen Diſcontent. Even the celebrated Death of the grave *Cato* may poſſibly appear at laſt, to have proceeded from no higher, or better Principle. For after all that Ancients and Moderns have ſaid of this Caſe,

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ores: Catoni autem cum incredibilem tribuiſſet natura gravitatem, *&c.* —— *And therefore becauſe he was an old and grave Man, 'twas unbecoming his Age and Gravity to live under a young Conqueror.*

* Atque hæc differentia naturarum tantam habet vim, ut nonnunquam mortem ſibi ipſe conſciſcere alius debeat, alius in eâdem causâ non debeat. *Cic. in loc. ſup. cit.*

† Corellium quidem ſumma ratio, quæ ſapientibus pro neceſſitate eſt, ad hoc conſilium compulit. *Plin. Ep. l. 1. Ep. 12.*

‡ Tam longâ, tam iniquâ valetudine (videlicet pedum dolore) conflictabatur, ut —— pretia vivendi mortis rationibus vincerentur.

I would only ask, what there was in the voluntary Death of this admir'd *Roman*, that can, upon a closer and cooler Review of things, be thought worthy of the least Commendation? 'Tis not very easie, I believe, to discover any one commendable Motive, any one generous Principle, that might prompt him to this unnatural Act. Was it the Love of his Country, that then glow'd in his Breast? Why then did he not resolve to live, that he might support or fall with it; that he might either labour to prevent, or take his share in the impending Calamities; that by his wise and bold Counsels he might either reform and disarm the Conqueror, or perish nobly in the Attempt? This had been Brave and Generous: But to shrink at the Approach of Danger, to retreat in a Pet, to quit his Post, when there was most need of his Presence, speak neither the Patriot, the Philosopher, nor the Hero. 'Twas impossible, indeed, for him to foresee of what signal service the small remainder of his time might have been at that nice critical Juncture: But 'twas easie and natural to suppose, that greater Advantage must have accru'd to his Countrymen, greater Credit to their sinking Cause, and greater Glory to himself, by his continuance in Life, than by such a hasty and precipitate Death. Besides, he could not be ignorant of the common Vicissitude of human Affairs, of the Superintendency of a general and particular Providence in all remarkable Revolutions of State, and consequently, that 'tis a point of Prudence as well as of Piety, for Men to submit their Wills to

the Sovereign Will of the great Governour of the Univerſe. On the contrary, if Men were oblig'd upon every turn of adverſe Fortune, inſtead of a reſolute Oppoſition, or immovable Conſtancy in the worſt of Times, to get out of the way as faſt as they could, by a ſudden and voluntary Death, the World by this time muſt have been, in a manner, depopulated, and the Race of Mankind extinct. Nay, farther, had *Cato* thought it inglorious to live under the victorious Arms of *Cæſar*, why did he adviſe his Friends and his Son to ſue for his Favour and Protection? How inconſiſtent is this Advice with his own deſperate Purpoſe? How flatly do his Words contradict his Actions*? What then could move him to act as he did, but Pride, or Shame, or Envy, or Impatience? Some

* De cujus (*viz.* Catonis) facto quid potiſſimum dicam, niſi quod amici ejus docti quidem viri, qui hoc fieri prudentius diſſuadebant, imbecillioris quàm fortioris animi facinus eſſe cenſuerunt: quo demonſtraretur non honeſtas turpia præcavens, ſed infirmitas adverſa non ſuſtinens. Hoc & ipſe Cato in ſuo chariſſimo filio judicavit. Nam ſi turpe erat ſub victoriâ Cæſaris vivere, cur autor hujus turpitudinis pater filio fuit, quem de Cæſaris benignitate omnia ſperare præcepit? Cur non & illum ſecum coegit ad mortem? Nam ſi eum filium qui contra imperium in hoſtem pugnaverat etiam victorem, laudabiliter Torquatus occidit, cur victus victo filio pepercit Cato qui non pepercit ſibi? An turpius erat contra imperium eſſe victorem, quam contra decus ferre victorem? Nullo modo igitur Cato turpe eſſe judicavit ſub victore Cæſare vivere, alioquin ab hâc turpitudine paterno ferro filium liberaret. Quid eſt ergo, niſi quod filium quantum amavit, cui parci à Cæſare & ſperavit & voluit, tantum gloriæ ipſius Cæſaris, ne ab illo etiam ſibi parceretur, ut ipſe Cæſar dixiſſe fertur, invidit: aut ut aliquid nos mitius dicamus, erubuit? *Aug. de Civ. Dei, l.* 1. *c.* 23.

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or all of theſe together, muſt have had an Influence in the forming his Deſign. And are theſe commendable Motives for a Man to act upon in ſo momentous a Point? Are theſe fit Diſpoſitions of Soul for a Man to make his Exit in, to take his leave of this World, and ſeek for a better? Thoſe who ſtill pay ſuch a mighty regard to the Memory of this renown'd *Roman*, ſhould always take care to caſt a Veil of Silence and Forgetfulneſs over this dark and laſt Scene of his Life, and not vainly think of dignifying and diſtinguiſhing the Man by that which only tends to rob him of all his Glory. In ſhort, if thoſe who would ſtill paſs for Chriſtians, muſt have Heatheniſh Precedents to commend and copy after, let them take a *Regulus*, and not a *Cato* for their Pattern: Let them learn to ſuffer, before they think themſelves fit to die. In order to frame a right Notion of the vaſt Difference in point of Courage, between theſe Two yet equally admir'd *Romans*, the following brief Compariſon between them may not be unſerviceable.

Regulus had a Soul prepar'd to abide the utmoſt Extremity of Torment, rather than betray his Country, or throw away his Life. *Cato* proudly ſcorning to owe his Life to the Clemency of his Conqueror, could not bear the Thoughts of outliving the trifling common Shame of being conquer'd. Both profeſs'd, no doubt, a mighty Zeal and Love for their Country; but both can't obtain the like Belief. The Profeſſion of the one was manifeſtly ſincere, and confirm'd by the moſt de-

demonſtrative Proofs; but the other's remains ſtill in Darkneſs and Obſcurity. Nay, 'tis but too viſible, that *Cato* ſtudy'd nothing more, than to avoid a little imaginary Diſgrace, not caring what became afterwards of the Commonwealth; while *Regulus* wholly diſregarding and forgetful of himſelf, conſulted only the publick Intereſt and Honour. If private Pains and Penalties, if perſonal Ignominy and Diſgrace, had been the only things in View, *Regulus* might have avoided theſe by a voluntary Death, as well as *Cato*: But he abhorr'd the Thought, and bravely choſe to ſuffer a thouſand bitter Deaths from the Hands of his Enemies, than to bring a ſcandalous one upon himſelf. The one may be ſaid to have prefer'd Liberty to Life; the other devoted both Life and Liberty to the general Good. *Regulus*, 'tis true, had bound himſelf by a ſolemn Promiſe and Oath to return to his Captivity, if the Embaſſy he was ſent upon prov'd unſucceſsful; that is, if he could not procure of the *Roman Senate* an Exchange of Priſoners, or a Reſtitution of the *Carthaginian* Captives: But then he was not oblig'd by Oath or Promiſe (and 'twas contrary to the Principle of Self-Preſervation) to diſſuade the Senate from conſenting to this thing, even in the Audience of the two *Carthaginian* Legates, that attended them. And 'twas his Arguments alone prevail'd in this caſe *. So that in every

* Regulus miſſus à Carthaginienſibus ad Senatum, ut de pace, & ſi eam non poſſet impetrare, de Captivis commutandis ageret; jurejurando aſtrictus eſt rediturum ſe Car-

every Step of his wonderful Proceeding he diſcover'd the Patriot and the Hero, ſhewing no other Concern for himſelf, than only to make his Life, his Sufferings and his Death as ſerviceable as poſſible, to the *Roman* State. But in *Cato*'s laſt Conduct there's evidently more of the Selfiſh, than the Publick Spirit; more Concern for his own, than his Country's Honour; all his Aim being to fly the Face of the Conqueror, and to rob *Cæſar* of the Glory of ſparing and ſaving *Cato* *. *Laſtly*, *Cato*'s untimely End was neither by Deſign, nor in the Event of any the leaſt Service to the *Roman* Cauſe, as neither ſtopping the victorious Arms of *Cæſar*, nor preventing the Change of Government that was then meditated, and afterwards effected. But the heroic and honourable Death of *Regulus* prov'd of conſiderable Advantage to the *Roman* Arms, as, inſpiring thoſe brave Spirits with a noble Reſentment, and ſpurring them on to more glorious Atchievements againſt their old inveterate Enemies, againſt whom they now fought, as the Hiſtorian obſerves †, with greater Ardor and Ala-

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Carthaginem, ſi commutari Captivos non placuiſſet: utrumque negandi auctor Senatui fuit: & quum fide cuſtoditâ reverſus eſſet, ſupplicio à Carthaginienſibus de eo ſumpto, periit. *Liv. l.* 18.

* Nota eſt illa Cæſaris vox ad nuncium mortis Catonis; *Invideo, Cato, gloriæ tuæ, nam & tu invidiſti meæ, ne inter cætera mea præclarè facta numeraretur & illud, me Catonem ſervaſſe.*

† Populus Romanus multo acrior infeſtiorque pro ultione Reguli, quam pro victoriâ fuit. *Flor. l.* 2.

crity,

crity, not so much for the sake of Victory, as to obtain a complete Revenge for the inhuman Death of their late illustrious Consul. Accordingly, 'tis remark'd, that soon after *Metellus* gave the *Carthaginian* Forces a signal Defeat. Upon the whole then, tho' *Tully* in his *Offices* speaks somewhat favourably of the unjustifiable Death of *Cato*, according to the *Roman* Principles, and Practices of those times; yet that *Regulus* (whose Case he has more critically examin'd and discuss'd) stands highest in his Opinion and Esteem, is pretty clear from these Words, *Quare ex multis mirabilibus exemplis, haud facilè quis dixerit hoc exemplo* (viz. Reguli) *aut laudabilius, aut præstantius* *. And were a Tragedy form'd upon the Plan of *Regulus*'s Conduct and invincible Constancy, he would make a much more famous Figure, than ever *Cato* did, either in the *Roman* Annals, or on the *British* Stage. To reform the *British* Taste in this respect, and to prompt some generous Poet to the Attempt, I shall throw into the Margin the ingenious and judicious Reflections of St. *Austin* on this Subject †. But,

Third-

* Cic. de Offic. l. 3.

† Nolunt autem isti contra quos agimus, ut sanctum virum Job, qui tam horrenda mala in suâ carne perpeti maluit, quàm illatâ sibi morte omnibus carere cruciatibus: vel alios sanctos ex nostris literis summâ autoritate celsissimis fideque dignissimos, qui captivitatem dominationemque hostium ferre quàm sibi necem inferre maluerunt, Catoni præferamus: sed ex literis eorundem, illum Marco Catoni Marcum Regulum præferamus. Cato enim nunquam Cæsarem vicerat, cui victus dedignatus est subjici,

&

Thirdly, Whatever may be said in excuse or abatement of a Poet's talking somewhat magnificently of the imaginary Valour and Felicity of the *Self-destroyer*, there is another Author *, that has taken upon him directly to argue the Case, to plead powerfully for the Couragiousness of the Fact, and has us'd his utmost Efforts to vindicate it from the

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& ne subjiceretur à seipso elegit occidi. Regulus autem Pœnos jam vicerat, imperioque Romano Romanus Imperator, non ex civibus dolendam, sed ex hostibus laudandam victoriam reportaverat: ab eis tamen postea victus, maluit eos ferre serviendo, quàm eis auferre moriendo. Proinde servavit & sub Carthaginiensium dominatione patientiam, & in Romanorum dilectione constantiam: nec victum auferens corpus ab hostibus, nec invictum animum à civibus. Nec quod se occidere noluit vitæ hujus amore fecit. Hoc probavit, cum causâ promissi jurisque jurandi ad eosdem hostes, quos gravius in senatu verbis, quam in bello armis offenderat, sine ullâ dubitatione remeavit. Tantus itaque vitæ hujus contemptor, cùm sævientibus hostibus, per quaslibet pœnas eam finire, quam se ipse perimere maluit, magnum scelus esse si se homo interimat, proculdubio judicavit. Inter suos omnes laudabiles & virtutum insignibus illustres viros non proferunt Romani meliorem, quem neque felicitas corruperit: nam in tantâ victoriâ pauperrimus permansit, nec infelicitas fregerit: nam ad tanta exilia revertitur intrepidus. Porrò si fortissimi & præclarissimi viri terrenæ patriæ defensores, deorumque licet falsorum, non tamen fallaces cultores, sed veracissimi etiam juratores, qui hostes victos more ac jure belli ferire potuerunt: hi ab hostibus victi seipsos ferire noluerunt: & cum mortem minimè formidarent, victores tamen dominos ferre, quam eam sibi inferre maluerunt: quanto magis Christiani verum Deum colentes, & supernæ patriæ suspirantes ab hoc facinore temperabunt, si eos divina dispositio vel probandos vel emendandos ad tempus hostibus subjugaverit, quos in illâ humilitate non deserit, qui propter eos tam humiliter venit altissimus. *D. August. de Civ. Dei, l. 1. cap.* 24.

* *See* London *Journal*, N°. 264.

Imputation of Cowardice. Nay, he goes ſo far as to affirm, that *the Imputation of Cowardice, laid upon this Action, by ſome ſubtil Diſputants, has rather made Diverſion upon the Subject, than ever given ſatisfaction. Farther, is it Fear* (ſays he) *to do a Deed, which almoſt all Mankind have always dreaded to do? Is Fear only concern'd in parting with Life, and Courage not ſeen but in preſerving it? Certainly, the nature of Words and Things is not at once to be utterly ſubverted, to keep in countenance a piece of Chicanry —— To talk in this Stile to Perſons engag'd in this Argument, is to affront them, by attempting to impoſe on them, in their plainneſt and moſt natural Apprehenſions of things, and inmoſt Sentiments of their own State and Condition. —— He who deliberately puts an end to his own Life, may juſtly, I am perſuaded, be cenſur'd as led by a corrupt Judgment, and guilty of a criminal Act; but it is as abſurd to ſay, that he is a Coward, as it would be to ſay, that he who laviſhes away an Eſtate in one particular way, is a Miſer; or to go on to all other Inſtances of Vertue and Vice, Excellencies and Imperfections, and change our whole Language, and new-model all our Words. ——* Now, what particular Reaſons the Author might have, to make him ſo very peremptory, ſanguine and dogmatical, on this occaſion, I know not: But ſurely, when a Man ſets himſelf to oppoſe the current Maxims and general Sentiments of Mankind, in a Point of moral Good or Evil (which Maxims and Sentiments, it is to be preſum'd, are the reſult of long Obſervation, deep Reſearches, and

and a close Enquiry into the nature and reason of things) he ought, in the

First place, to propound to himself, upon rational Grounds, and probable Views, the doing some considerable good, by his Endeavour to rectifie what he esteems popular Errors. *Secondly*, 'Tis highly incumbent on him, that after a strict and impartial Examination of the several Arguments on both sides, he be fully satisfied in his own Mind of the Truth, Justice and Importance of what he is going to offer to publick View. *Thirdly*, 'Tis expected from him, that he be not only satisfy'd himself, but produce such cogent Reasons and demonstrative Proofs for the satisfaction of others, as are capable, in their own nature, when duly weigh'd, to convince all serious and considerate Persons of a contrary Persuasion. The two first of these Requisites are absolutely necessary to justifie a Man to God and his own Conscience, and the other to the World. And tho' 'tis remarkable, that among the numerous Modern Writers that labour to overthrow settl'd Notions and establish'd Doctrines of Morality, there is not one, but makes loud Pretences to all three; yet where, almost, is the Writer that makes good his Pretensions to more than one? In pure good Nature and Charity, we generally suppose a Man really believes himself what he writes or asserts, tho' his Arguments be all over Sophistry and Self-contradiction, and there be no appearance of any honest Design at the bottom. And this is all that can fairly be allow'd the Author of the Letter under Consideration, who has no

Claim or Pretence whatsoever to the first and last of the aforemention'd Qualifications. To leave the Argumentative Part to be examin'd hereafter, let me previously and seriously ask this one Question, What possible Good he could propose to himself, by by writing tenderly and favourably in any one respect, of the detestable Crime of *Self-Murther*? Could he think hereby to lessen either the Guilt or the Frequency of the Fact? Suppose for the present, (what I am going to disprove) that it was a false Notion of some People, that this was a cowardly Act; what Mischief to the Publick, what Detriment to Mankind, what Inconvenience to private Persons, could such an erroneous Opinion have produc'd? On the contrary, may it not reasonably be presum'd, that a Person under the temptation of destroying himself, would be less inclin'd to perpetrate the horrid Fact, while dreading the Imputation of Cowardice, than when pluming himself with the Hopes of being deem'd to have acted very couragiously? But to come to the Point. —— I observe two gross fundamental Errors that run thro' and support the whole Reasoning of this Letter-writer; which I shall first examine, and refute, and then proceed, by plain and positive Arguments, to confirm the receiv'd Notion, That *Self-Murther* is a base, mean-spirited and cowardly Act.

First, The Author takes for granted (what he will never be able to prove) that the Instinct of Self-preservation, in a limited sense too, with

with regard to this Life only, is the strongest and most active Principle in Man. *Secondly*, He has very wrong and confus'd Notions of Courage and Cowardice, blending them sometimes together, and often mistaking one for the other.

I begin with his fundamental Error, *viz.* his taking for granted, *&c.* His Words to this effect, are as follow: — *Is it Pusillanimity or Fearfulness to be able to grapple or subdue the strongest Passion radicated in our Nature, the Love of Life?* To this I answer, That there is a much stronger Passion, or rather Principle grafted in our Nature, that over-rules this, and governs all the rest; and that is, the innate Desire that is in every Man of Happiness in general, and which when determin'd to any particular Object, operates more forcibly, and bears down all before it. No Man, whether good or evil, places his Happiness in Life, barely and abstractedly consider'd, but only so far as his Life contributes to his Happiness. Should this Life of his prove otherwise, an insuperable Hindrance or Obstruction to his Felicity, he would be so far from fearing the Loss of it, that he would earnestly desire to get rid of it. And therefore what *Job* ingenuously confess'd of himself, is certainly true of all Persons under any the like grievous Pressures, *My Soul chuseth Strangling and Death, rather than my Life* *. If 'tis a vertuous and good Man, that is under such a calamitous State, he must necessarily desire Death, and wish

* Job 7. 15.

that

that Providence would send him his Discharge, being morally assur'd of a Happiness after this Life: But then he waits God's time for it. If he be a wicked and profligate Person, and yet believes somewhat of a future State, 'tis only the Fear of That, and not the Fear of Death, that can restrain him from wishing and endeavouring his own Destruction. But when the Riddance of Life is suggested to such a one, as the only Method whereby to get rid of his Miseries, unless he be arm'd in some measure, with Faith and Fortitude, to bear the present, and fear the distant Evil, he will certainly choose Death, as the means of his Happiness, and rush into it as eagerly as the Horse rushes into Battel. How formidable soever Death may be in it self, there are many Instances of Persons to whom it appears with no frightful Aspect at all. And 'tis a gross Mistake, to think, that our Fears always bear a due Proportion to the Object, and that they rise or fall as the Object is more or less formidable. In Reason indeed, it ought to be so; but in Fact we generally find it otherwise: And a Man must be very little acquainted with the Workings of Nature, and the Irregularity of the Passions, that has not made so obvious and common an Observation. The Terror or Dreadfulness of an Object affects the Mind, not as it is greater or less in it self, but as it is apprehended; whereby it comes to pass, that a small thing shall sometimes terrifie more, than an infinitely greater; and the Fear of Shame or Disgrace, of a long Imprisonment or Captivity, of falling into Poverty or into the

the Hands of an Enemy, shall work more powerfully than the Fear of Death; yea, so far as to extinguish, and even annihilate the other Fear: For the greater Fear always overcomes and swallows up the less. And as Men are generally govern'd in the Conduct of Civil Life more by Fear than by any other Passion; so 'tis the Greatness or Intenseness of their Fear, (whatever the Object or Cause of that be) that puts them upon Action. Here let me observe by the bye, that were the true Fear of God once deeply rooted and fix'd in the Heart, this alone would govern or dispel all the inferiour Class of Fears: But where this is wanting, there can be no true Courage; but some dastardly Fear or other will be ever and anon obtruding it self upon the Mind, and when predominant, will betray the Succours of Reason and Courage too. To say then absolutely and unexceptionably, that the Love of Life, or the Fear of Death is the strongest Passion in Man, is an unprov'd and ill-grounded Assertion. 'Tis certain, that the true Love of one's Country, or of one's Friend, will make a Man, upon a trying Occasion, hazard Life, and despise Death. 'Tis certain, that the Fear of being ravish'd, has been more strong and powerful in some Women, than the Fear of being kill'd; that the Fear of open Shame has made many a Criminal exchange a Publick for a Private and Voluntary Death; yea, that the Fear of being Apprehended, has made some dispatch themselves. Death then, in all these Instances, is not the thing fear'd at that Juncture, but something else;

and

and to escape or get rid of the latter, they readily choose and embrace the former. "And, indeed, "'tis worth our observing, that there is no Passion "in the Mind of Man so weak, but it masters "the Fear of Death; Revenge triumphs over it; "Love slights it; Honour aspires after it; Grief "flies to it: Nay, Pity, the tenderest of them all, "provok'd many of *Otho*'s Followers to die, in "compassion to their Emperor, who had slain "himself" *. Not that I deny, but that when there is time for Deliberation, there may be many Struggles in a Man's Breast, before the fatal Resolution be form'd and executed. But then, as 'tis impossible for us to know, with what Fearfulness and Unconcernedness such Persons go about it, nothing certain can be concluded from hence. However, take the matter either way, something favourable to the Point I am defending, may be collected from it. If the Self-Murtherer be supposed to commit this Violence upon himself, with a Trepidity of Heart, and with some faint Reluctance to the last, this is no surer Mark of true Courage, than when a Person, after long suffering the Pain of the Tooth-Ach, and after much Importunity of Friends, resolves at length, but still with some Averseness and Dread, to have the Tooth drawn out; or, when a sick Lady, after much Debate and Struggle with herself, holds out her trembling Arm to be bleeded, or submits to

* Hartcliffe's *Treat. of Mor. and Intell. Vertues*, p. 40.

the

the more terrifying Prescription of the *Cold Bath*. But if the *Self-Murtherer* goes about his dark Work without any Emotion of Fear or sensible Concern, this plainly shews, that as he dreads nothing more than a continuance of the Miseries he feels; so he desires nothing more than a Discharge from those Miseries; and therefore meets Death, not as an Enemy, but as a Friend, whose Approaches are pleasing, and Embraces welcome: And consequently in neither case is true Valor to be try'd or discerned, as will still more evidently appear, by examining and considering our Author's other fundamental Error, *viz.* his wrong and confus'd Definition of *Courage* and *Cowardice*.

Before a Man presumes to draw a Conclusion, and especially before he grows very peremptory and assuming upon it, he ought to be very well assur'd of the strength of his Premisses, or at least to have a very clear and distinct Idea of the Terms. Otherwise he talks altogether in the dark, and fights with Shadows of his own making. How well this Author has perform'd in these respects, I'll leave the Reader to judge from the following Observations.

First, I observe, that the Author no where declares his Opinion whether *Courage* be a Vertue or not. *Tully* tells us, *Fortitudo est viri propria virtus*, that *Fortitude* is not only a Vertue, put the *proper* and peculiar *Vertue of a Man*. One would think likewise by the great Commendations which this Author gives of what he is pleas'd to call *Active* or *Positive Courage*, that he is all along representing *Courage* as a Vertue: But then, by applying this to the Self-

Murtherer, and by making any daring Action a Part or Inſtance of this *Poſitive Courage*, he forbids us, in Charity, to think that he means any ſuch thing. Indeed, take his Notion of *Courage* either way, 'tis not very eaſie to gueſs what he means, or what he is driving at. If *Poſitive Courage*, in his Account, be a Vertue, then, according to his Notion of *Suicide*, the Self-Murtherer, as ſuch, is ſo far from needing Repentance, that he acts a very vertuous part in killing himſelf. A wondrous Diſcouragement to that horrid Crime! If the Courage he is ſpeaking of, be no Vertue after all, what need was there of ſo much Pains and Labour, to aſcribe to a Fact or Perſon what has no title to the leaſt Commendation? For, in truth, nothing in Man is worthy of Praiſe and Diſpraiſe, but Vertue and Vice. Abſtract *Vertue* from *Courage*, and then indeed, any daring Action is an Act of Courage; then the moſt paſſionate Men are the moſt Couragious, and the moſt deſperate Ruffians the greateſt Heroes: A fine Character for a Man of Courage! At this rate, a Man inflam'd with Liquor, that cares not whom he ſtabs, and knows not what he does; and a mad Man, that, in the height of his frantick Fury, deals about Fire-brands, Arrows and Darts, may, in vertue of this Author's wild Definition, be dubb'd for Men of Valour and Renown. But certainly, Courage in reaſonable Creatures muſt have Reaſon to act upon; otherwiſe, 'tis Sottiſhneſs and Brutality. And if Courage be once ſeparated from Reaſon and Vertue, there is ſo little Glory belonging to it, that I ſhall deſpair of ſeeing

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our greateſt *Deſperadoes* ever arrive to the Courage of a *Game-Cock*, or a *Maſtiff-Dog*. But if *Courage* or *Fortitude* have a place among the Vertues (and I think, the very *Heathens* have rank'd it among their four Cardinal Ones) then, like all other Vertues, it muſt be plac'd between two Extremes, between one Vice in Defect, and the other in Exceſs. The Defect, we all know, is Timouroufneſs or Cowardice; and the Exceſs Raſhneſs, Stupidity, or Fool-hardineſs; and whoever is guilty of the latter, is as void of true Courage, as he that is chargeable with the former. For a Man that has no ſenſe of Danger, can never be ſaid to act couragiouſly, ſince the only two Objects of true Courage are *Danger* and *Diſtreſs*. *2dly*, I obſerve, that the diſtinctions which the Author makes between *Active* and *Paſſive Courage*, and the Preference he gives to the former, making the other to be ſcarce any Courage at all, are Poſitions, not only wide of the Truth, and contradictory to Reaſon and Experience, but of pernicious tendency in the Conduct of Human Life. *Tully*, in his *Offices* aſſerts, *Fortis & conſtantis eſt, non perturbari in rebus aſperis, nec tumultuantem de gradu dejici*; and afterwards defines Fortitude to be *Dolorum laborumque contemptio.* But this Author, in oppoſition to Heathen *, as well as Chriſtian Moraliſts, will ſcarce allow of any ſuch thing as *Paſſive Fortitude. Conſtancy in enduring Trouble*, ſays he, *may indeed, have ſomewhat in it of the nature of Courage,*

* Communis eſt ſententia, Fortitudinem in ſuſtinendo magis elucere. *Philoſ. Burgund. Tom.* 3 *p.* 200.

but it is not what is truly signify'd by that Word. In an accurate, and philosophical way of Thinking, the ordinary Cases and Distresses of Life are not properly Subjects for Courage. —— Again, there is a great deal of difference between *Active* and *Passive Courage*; 'tis one thing to suffer patiently, 'tis another to be bold and daring. But among all his Differences and Distinctions, the Author has forgotten one, that is taken notice of by most Moralists, and which it concern'd him not a little to take notice of too; and that is, the Distinction between the Fortitude of the Mind, and the Fortitude of the Body *. Now, Passive Fortitude is the vertuous Fruit of a sound Mind; but Active Fortitude is no other, generally speaking, than the Result of a sound Constitution. Men that are in health, and live high, have their natural Courage, commonly, too much at command; their Constitution is vigorous, their Spirits brisk, their Passions boisterous and untameable. But what is this to the Courage and Constancy of a Man labouring, but not sinking, under the Pressures and Severities of Life; of a Man, that, destitute, in a great measure, of the Supports of the Body, and the Assistance of the Animal Spirits, possesses his Soul in Peace and Patience, and continues easie and undisturb'd under the want of Health,

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* Fortitudo vel corporis est, vel animi. Fortitudo corporis in lacertis & viribus consistit: sed talis leonum quoque & taurorum est. Hæc propriè virtus non est. Fortitudo animi vel Christiana est, vel Civilis, &c. *Walæi Comp. Eth. Arist. in Cap.* de Fortitudine. *The rest of this Chapter is well worth the curious Reader's Perusal; where he'll find the very Question I am upon*, viz. Whether *Suicide* be an Act of Fortitude, or not, *clearly and accurately discuss'd.*

Liberty,

Liberty, Friends and Estate? Let this Author still believe, if he pleases, that Constancy in enduring Trouble, has very little of the nature of Courage: On the contrary, I shall ever believe, that our *Saviour Christ* was the most Couragious Man that ever liv'd; and accordingly he is stil'd *the Captain of our Salvation*, (a Title importing Courage as well as Honour,) surely, not because he acted daringly, but because he was made perfect thro' Sufferings *. This may be farther illustrated in a View of St. *Paul*'s passive Gallantry, as a Christian Convert, and his active Courage as a Jewish Persecutor. Whilst he was breathing out Threatenings and Slaughters, imprisoning and beating in every Synagogue them that believ'd on Christ, when being exceedingly mad against them, he either compell'd them to blaspheme, or persecuted them unto strange Cities, as he afterwards confesses with Shame and Sorrow †, he may be said in our Author's Style, to have been a stout and valiant Man. Be that as it will, his Courage was not lessen'd, but greatly increas'd, by his Conversion: Being chang'd from Active into Passive, it shone with a brighter Lustre, and became more Exemplary and Heroic. *Greater Love hath no Man than this*, says our Saviour; and, Greater Courage hath no Man than this, may we say, *that a Man lay down his Life for his Friends* ‡. But so tender was this Great Apostle of the Lives of others, and so prodigal of his own, that he wish'd himself accurs'd for his Brethren; so far from of-

* Heb. 5. 9. † Acts 26. 9, 10, 11. ‡ Joh. 15. 13.

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fering them any Violence, that he would rather ſuffer the greateſt Violence himſelf. What can be more brave and generous, than that couragious Speech of his, *Acts* 20. 23, 24, 25? *And now behold, I go bound in the Spirit to* Jeruſalem, *not knowing the things that ſhall befal me there; ſaving that the Holy Ghoſt witneſſeth in every City, ſaying, that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of theſe things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myſelf, ſo that I might finiſh my courſe with joy.* And when his Fellow-Chriſtians hung about him, and with Tears endeavour'd to diſſuade him from his Journey to *Jeruſalem*, he anſwer'd reſolutely, *What mean you to weep, and to break mine heart? For I am ready, not to be bound only, but alſo to die at* Jeruſalem *for the Name of the Lord Jeſus*, Acts 21. 13. If we compare the Catalogue he gives us of his Manly Sufferings, 2 *Cor.* 12. with the Account we have of the furious Perſecutions he brought upon others, we ſhall diſcover much more of the complete Hero in the former, than in the latter, and that too without the Fault. But to come nearer to our own times, and to take an Inſtance out of our Nation: —— View the Protector *Cromwell*, that Brave Wicked Man, as *Clarendon* calls him, at the Head of his victorious Rebel-Army; View him in his daring Exploits, in all his Dangers, and all his Succeſſes; and then turn your Eyes upon his nobly vanquiſh'd Sovereign, long ſtrugling againſt the impetuous Streams of an adverſe Fortune; at laſt betray'd and ſold; ſold by Friends, ſold to Enemies. View him cloſely in his Confinement, and under his Arraigment. See with what Meekneſs and Majeſty he

he confronts his Mock-Judges; with what dispassionate Undauntedness he receives the fatal unjust Sentence. Behold him marching with hasty Steps and eager Triumph, to seize the Crown of Martyrdom. View him at length entring the Lists with the King of Terrors, surrounded with all his blackest Attendants of insulting Cruelty, Ignominy and Horror, unmov'd at the sight of Axes and Scaffold, submitting his sacred Head to the deadly Blow with invincible Patience and Alacrity; in afflictive Life heroic, in Death more than Conqueror. And then confess, which had the greatest Courage of the two, and whether the daring Actions of the one are worthy to be compar'd with the passive Fortitude of the other. Now, the reason of this passive Fortitude in good Men, is thus handsomely accounted for by a clear and excellent Writer*. "When "Men can acquit themselves as to the main, when "they can give a fair Account, or suffer in a good "Cause, they usually leave this World with great "Evenness and Satisfaction, and bear up against "the harshest Circumstances, with singular Forti-"tude and Unconcernedness: They have naturally "a secret Presage, that Providence will appear "for them afterwards; that Folly, and Violence, "and Injustice will domineer only in this Life; "but that Reason and Honesty will be consider'd "in the other. This Persuasion, buoys up their "Innocence, and supports their Spirits, and "hardens their Resolution, and makes them almost

* Collier's *Sermons*, p. 8.

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" impregnable againſt all Accidents and Injuries. " This Conſideration made *Socrates* appear ſo great " and ſo graceful at his Tryal; the hopes of ap- " pearing before more equal Judges after Death, " where his Cauſe would be re-heard and juſtify'd, " made him deſpiſe the Malice of his Enemies, " diſdain the Meanneſs of eſcaping Priſon, and " drink off the mortal Draught, with as little " Concern, as if it had been at an Entertainment." In ſhort, paſſive Courage is a Vertue, and always a Vertue; but what is call'd *active Courage*, is often no other than a Defect of the former, and moſt commonly made an Inſtrument of Vice, of Inſults, Perſecutions, Murthers and Rebellions. Let me farther add, that whoever is endu'd with paſſive Courage, will never be wanting in a good Cauſe, and on proper Occaſions, to diſtinguiſh himſelf likewiſe by an active Bravery. But the greateſt Proficients in the active kind, may, and often do flag, when call'd to exert a paſſive Fortitude. Take an Inſtance or two of this from Scripture. None naturally more forward, bold and daring than the Apoſtle St. *Peter*: He could venture, when bid by his Saviour, to walk upon the Waves of the Sea; but no ſooner did he begin to ſink, but his Faith and his Courage fail'd him at once. He could venture, out of Zeal to his Maſter, to draw his Sword in the Garden, and ſingly encounter a whole Band of Soldiers; but when he came into a Court of Judicature, upon the bare ſuſpicion of a ſilly Maid, he loſt his Courage, forgot himſelf, and deny'd his Lord. So little Dependance is there to be had

had of *Active Courage* in a Day of Tryal, and in the Hour of Diſtreſs. And truly, how common is it for Men in the height of Grandeur, and in a Flow of Proſperity, to behave with a ſeemingly undaunted Courage, to be bold and forward in great Undertakings, to deſpiſe Enemies, and laugh at Dangers; and yet upon a turn of Times, or under the Frowns of Fortune, to betray an effeminate Softneſs and Feebleneſs of Heart, a Meanneſs of Spirit, and an abject Soul? Inſtances enough of this may be ſeen almoſt every day. But now, on the contrary, he that is able to ſuffer, is able to act with Courage. *Moſes*, the meekeſt Man upon Earth, (and whoſe Meekneſs and Patience were ſufficiently try'd and exercis'd by that untoward and perverſe Generation of Men in the Wilderneſs) when jealous for the Lord of Hoſts, and provok'd by the Idolatry of the *Iſraelites*, in making and worſhipping the *Golden Calf*, had Courage enough, ſingly and alone, to attack a vaſt Number of People, to ſeize their Idol in the midſt of their Dancing and Jollity, to break it in pieces before their Faces, to grind it to Pouder, and make the Idolaters drink of the Water into which he had thrown it. 'Twas the ſame patient and diſpaſſionate *Moſes*, that boldly withſtood and quell'd the dangerous and threatening Mutiny of *Corah* and his Company. And 'twas his great Love to the God he ſerv'd, and to the People he govern'd, that made him ſo Couragious. For true Courage is founded in Love, proceeds from Love, and is perfected by Love. For what the Apoſtle aſſerts of Divine Love, is cer-

tainly true, in this reſpect, of all other Loves, that *perfect Love caſteth out Fear* †. 'Tis the Love of one's King and one's Country, that makes a Man ready to ſacrifice his All, in their Defence. 'Tis the Love of thoſe that are near and dear to us, that makes us willing to hazard even Life for their Sakes. 'Tis the Love of Souls that emboldens Miniſters to correct popular Errors, and rebuke faſhionable Vices, and to riſque Men's preſent Diſpleaſure, in order to promote their Future, Good. 'Twas the Love God and of Chriſt, that inſpired all the Noble Army of Martyrs and Confeſſors with incincible Bravery and unparallel'd Forwardneſs to lay down their Lives. And to come nearer to the Ways and Sentiments of ſome Men, even Carnal or Senſual Love, has a Force in it, to change the Natures and Tempers of Men, to provoke the Meek, animate the Faint-hearted, and make even Cowards themſelves Brave. But what Love is there to be found in *Self-Murther*, or what one generous Principle or Motive to prompt to that unnatural Act? Nay, are there any other aſſignable Cauſes for this Enormity, than either an exceſſive Dread of what a Man is like to ſuffer for his Crimes in this life, or a wretched Impatience under the Miſeries which his Crimes have already brought upon him? Theſe are the Two general and Fundamental Cauſes, join'd with looſe Notions of Religion or ſettled Principles of Atheiſm, into which all Wilful *Self-Murther* is plainly reſolvable. There may be ſome few Ex-

† 1 Joh. 4. 18.

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ceptions (as there are in all general Cases) to the contrary: But these, I say, are the common and general Causes. What made *Achitophel* hang himself, but the Dread of falling into the hands of *David*, and suffering the Punishment due to his Treason *? What made *Zimri* burn himself in the Palace of the King's House, but the like Dread of falling into the hands of *Omri*, and being put to a more shameful Death, for his late Conspiracy against, and Murther of the former King†? And what was it tempted *Judas* to be his own Executioner, but that intolerable Load of Guilt, and that Horror and Consternation of Mind, which his complicated Sin in betraying the Lord of Life, had brought upon him? Nay, not only a Consciousness of Guilt, but the bare Dread of Punishment, however undeserv'd, shall sometimes produce the same Effect. This was visible in the Case of the Jaylor in the *Acts*, who was going to kill himself for missing his Prisoners, *Paul* and *Silas*; a most convincing and remarkable Proof of the Truth I am defending. For what else was it, but a sudden and violent Impression of Fear, that prompted him to this intended Violence upon himself? He dreaded the Anger and Severity of the Magistrates; he dreaded the Shame and Reproach of a publick Execution; and so to avoid one kind of Death, was for bringing another upon himself. His Innocence, you see, could not secure him from this Fear; and his Fear would certainly have wrought his Destruction, had not the

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* 2 Sam. 17. 23. † 1 Kin. 16. 18.

Apoſtles timely prevented it. And how prevalent then muſt ſuch a Fear be, when attended with Guilt? And who can ſay then, that this would have been an Act of Courage, when 'tis evident, that he was all over Fear at the ſame time; that 'twas Fear which began, and carry'd on, and would have executed his murtherous Purpoſe? A plain Demonſtration, that a Man may commit a bold and deſperate Act, under the ſole Influence of *Fear* and *Cowardice*.

The Self-Murtherer then can lay no claim to Courage *Active* or *Paſſive*; not to the latter, unleſs a a high Diſcontent at the Ways of Providence, and an unmanly ſinking under the neceſſary Penances and common Burthens of Life, may paſs for *Patience* and *Fortitude*; not to the former, becauſe he is wholly govern'd in this caſe by the daſtardly Principle of Fear, the Fear of encountring the Dangers which threaten or ſurround him. For whereas true Courage is ſeen in confronting, oppoſing, and vigorouſly endeavouring to overcome Danger, or in a manly bearing of what it can't overcome; *Self-Murther*, on the contrary, is nothing but a cowardly Flight from Danger or Diſtreſs, and uſing the baſeſt, the wickedeſt, and the moſt ſenſeleſs Means to get out of its reach. And what ſhall we ſay then of the Man that labours to dignify and diſtinguiſh this abſurd, unnatural, mean-ſpirited Act with the glorious Appellations of *Courage* and *Bravery*; that does not ſtick to aſſert and maintain (with what little colour of Reaſon has now been ſhewn) that *when a Man deliberately deſtroys his own Life, Courage, certainly, is the Quality leaſt wanting in him; and whatever other Defects or Guilt he may have,*

have, he can't be argued of Cowardice? But certainly (to use his own Expressions) *the nature of Words and Things is not at once to be utterly subverted, to keep in countenance a piece of Chicanry.* And if he believes any thing of the divine Authority of the Scriptures, he ought to consider the Denunciation of the Prophet, *Wo unto them that call Evil Good, and Good Evil, that put Darkness for Light, and Light for Darkness, that put Bitter for Sweet, and Sweet for Bitter**. Suppose he had some imperfect and confus'd Notion of the Couragiousness of this Fact, 'tis not for a Man writing against it, to put such a Stumbling-block in the way. Courage is the most popular and captivating Word that can be applied on this occasion; and no one knows, what fatal Mischief such an erroneous Opinion may produce among the melancholy and discontented Part of Mankind. But our Author has one Reserve still, by which he may possibly hope to evade all that has been said in disproof of his Position, *viz.* That *Suicide* implies a *Scorn* and Contempt *of Life*, which, at first sight, may be thought Noble and Brave. But to this I need only reply, that if it be an Instance of Courage in a Man, under Streights and Difficulties, to despise and throw away Life; it must, by the Rule of Contraries, be an Instance of Cowardice in a Man, under the same Circumstances, to be content to live. And one need not desire to reduce an Adversary to a greater Absurdity than this.

I have now, I think, consider'd every thing that is material or plausible in this Letter-Writer, relating

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* Isa. 5. 20.

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to the Subject in hand; and hope I have ſaid enough to convince any reaſonable impartial Perſon of the truth of my Firſt Propoſition, That *Self-Murther* is a baſe, mean-ſpirited and cowardly Act. However, that I may ſet this matter in the cleareſt Light, and utterly deſtroy the pernicious Notion, advanc'd by this Author, I ſhall briefly confirm and illuſtrate what has been obſerv'd, by ſome plain, poſitive and direct Proofs.

Firſt, 'Tis obſervable, that this Act of *Self-Murther* is generally perpetrated by Men the moſt diſpirited in the World, or by Perſons actually in Deſpair, or by thoſe who were always known to be of a cowardly nature. And what is done by Perſons of this Stamp and Character, whatever ſpecious Appearance it may have of Courage and Bravery, can never be ſuppos'd, without a manifeſt Abſurdity, to be the genuine Mark or Effect of true Valor: Not to mention here, what I may have occaſion to explain hereafter, that nothing is to be deem'd valorous that is inhuman; and 'tis certainly as much Inhumanity for a Man to deſtroy himſelf, as to deſtroy another. Now, as to the Truth of this Obſervation, that Men of the Tempers and Qualities before-mention'd, are generally moſt guilty of, and moſt liable to fall into the Crime of *Self-Deſtruction*, I may appeal to the common Experience of Mankind, and more eſpecially, ſince the time of the late monſtrous Riſe and Fall of S.S.S. There's not a Perſon, I dare ſay, within the Bills of Mortality, but his Memory can furniſh him with Inſtances more than enough, in proof of this melancholy Truth. In confirmation of the ſame Point, I

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ſhall take the liberty to give a brief Intimation of a late remarkable Inſtance in the Country. The Perſon I mean, was a young Man, whoſe Spirits were quite broken by the hard Uſage of a tyrannizing Father, who would ſcarce ever allow him, tho' Heir apparent to the Eſtate, to have a Sixpeny-Piece in his Pocket. Upon the Death of the Father, and his ſucceeding to the Eſtate (which the Father had taken care to charge and encumber as much as he could) the young Man was obſerv'd to be more diſpirited and dejected than before; and at laſt, could not forbear going about the Neighbourhood, and complaining of his hard Fate, and of the many inſuperable Perplexities he labour'd under, every Mole-hill appearing to him as big as Mountain, and every common Difficulty unſurmountable. I was call'd, among others, in to his Aſſiſtance: There was another, a Man of great Judgment, Learning and Candor; and we both happen'd to agree in the ſame Advice, and had chalk'd out a Way for him that would have made him perfectly eaſy, diſcharg'd all his Incumbrances, and put him in the Poſſeſſion of a clear and handſome Eſtate, if he had had the Heart or Reſolution to have follow'd our Direction. While with us, he ſeem'd to promiſe that he would; but when gone, was as uneaſy and diſſatisfy'd as ever; and in ſhort, inſtead of putting our Advice in execution, nay, without ſtaying to put his Houſe in order, he went home, and ſhot himſelf. So dangerous is it for Parents to break the Hearts and Spirits of their Children; and for Children, or others, to give

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way to Melancholy and Deſpondency; which will infallibly deprive them, ſooner or later, of the neceſſary Aids of God's Holy Spirit, and of the uſe of their Reaſon and Courage, when they ſtand moſt in need of their Succour, and ſo expoſe them, naked and defenceleſs, to all the Crafts and Aſſaults of the Devil. And here, by the way, let me juſt take notice of that dangerous Method of Publick Inſtruction, which many of our ancient Divines ran into, and is ſtill retain'd by ſome of the Moderns; I mean, of preaching up to the People thoſe abſtruſe and perplexing Points of *Election* and *Predeſtination*, and eſpecially that horrid and ſhocking Doctrine of *Eternal Reprobation*, which have often ſtagger'd, and confounded, and quite over-ſet the Thoughts of illiterate, but well-meaning Chriſtians, and prov'd the unhappy means of driving many into a deep and incurable Melancholy, and ſome from Melancholy into Deſpair, and from Deſpair into *Self-Deſtruction*.

Secondly, 'Tis an Obſervation no leſs true than the former, That the unfortunate Creatures we are ſpeaking of, have generally been addicted to a Life of Vice and Wickedneſs, or, however, were never Eminent for Vertue and Piety. And nothing enfeebles the Minds of Men more, in a Day of Adverſity, than a Conſciouſneſs of Guilt, or a feeling Experience that the Miſeries they ſuffer are the Natural Conſequences of their former vicious Courſes: And as ſuch a Reflection (without having immediate recourſe to the only ſaving Method of a true Repentance) muſt neceſſarily ſink their

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Spirits more and more, ſo of conſequence they muſt become leſs and leſs able to bear up under the preſent Burthen; till by degrees they come at laſt to the wretched State of a traiterous *Judas*, or a murthering *Cain*, and feel their Puniſhment greater than they can bear: And then 'tis no ſtrange thing, if thus deſtitute of *Faith*, and *Repentance*, they think there is no Remedy or Relief to be had but in the Grave. In ſhort, nothing does ſo weaken the Powers of Nature, or ſo effectually deſtroy the natural Courage of Man, as Wickedneſs unrepented of; which will, in time, bring down the Hearts of the ſtouteſt of the Sons of Men, betray the Succours of Reaſon and Reſolution, and make him that was appointed Lord of the Creation, more creeping, timorous and daſtardly, than the meaneſt of the Creatures. So true is that of *Solomon*, *The Wicked flee when no Man purſueth, but the Righteous are bold as a Lion* *. This is remarkable of all the Self-Murtherers recorded in Scripture: 'Twas Wickedneſs that robb'd them of their *Courage* and *Confidence*; and the Want of Courage, joyn'd with a Conſciouſneſs of their own Demerits, that kept them always in a fearful Expectation of Vengeance; and the dread of this being more bitter to them than Death, they thought it more eligible, or the leſs Evil of the two, to fall by their own hands, than to wait the ſtroke of the *Enemy* and the *Avenger*. 'Tis particularly obſerv'd of the Heroic King *Saul*, that when he had tranſgreſs'd the Commandments of the Lord, and the Spirit of the Lord was depart-

* Prov. 28. 1.

ed from him, his wonted Courage began to fail him more and more. This was first discoverd, when *the Philistine of* Gath *presented himself to the Armies of* Israel *Morning and Evening for forty Days together, and required a Man to fight with him.* Then 'tis said, that *Saul was dismay'd and greatly afraid* *. This afterwards became more visible, in his many cruel and cowardly Attempts to kill *David*, his reputed Successor; and appear'd yet more openly on Mount *Gilboa*, when, upon view of the Host of the *Philistines*, *he was afraid, and his Heart greatly trembled* †. After this, when he went to consult the Witch at *Endor*, and heard from the Mouth of *Samuel* (whether real or imaginary) the Prediction of his approaching Fate, his Courage and his Strength fail'd him at once: For *he fell straightway all along upon the Earth, and was sore afraid, and there was no strength in him* ‡. But still the finishing Stroke was left for himself; and he never appear'd so perfectly void of Courage, as when he desir'd his Armour-bearer to thrust him thro' with a Sword, and upon his Refusal, fell upon his own, and when that would not do neither, call'd for an *Amalekite* to help to put an end to his wretched Life ‖. How inglorious and mean-spirited was it for a King, the first King of *Israel*, at the Head of the Armies of the Living God, first to betake himself to Flight, and then to *Suicide*? How inglorious, for a Prince, worsted in the Field of Battel, not to perish by the Sword of an Enemy, but

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* 1 Sam. 17. 11. † 1 Sam. 28. 5. ‡ 1 Sam. 28. 20.
‖ *Compare* 1 Sam. 31. 4. *and* 2 Sam. 1. 9, 10.

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to fall by his own? Would it not have been much more honourable, and a much greater Argument of an heroic Mind, to have made a ſtand againſt the *Philiſtines*, to have continu'd fighting, and when ſure to die, to have reſolv'd (*Sampſon*-like) not to die alone: Or, if he muſt be taken alive, would it not have been more commendable and valorous, to have choſen Chains, Captivity and the worſt of Perſecutions, rather than to ſhun them by ſo ignoble a Means? But he had loſt his Integrity and his Courage, together; and no wonder then, if at laſt he fell a Sacrifice to his own Cowardice.

Thirdly, That *Self-Murther* is an Argument or Conſequence of Cowardice, will appear from hence, becauſe 'tis a tame and diſhonourable ſubmitting and yielding to our grand Adverſary the Devil. Other Sins may proceed only from the Allurements of the World, or from Mens own corrupt Inclinations; but this is owing to a direct Aſſault of the Devil, who *was a Murtherer from the beginning*, and ſo continues to this very Day: And, I verily believe, there is ſcarce any deliberate Murther committed, but that he has a principal Hand in it. He is an old experienc'd Warrior, throughly vers'd in all the Arts and Methods of Slaughter; that has a thouſand Baits and Stratagems, in the way of Strife and Contention, or of Impurity and Intemperance, to tempt unwary Souls to cut off the Thread of Life, and ſhorten the Day of Grace. Theſe are ſome of his round-about indirect Methods, by which the Briſk and Sanguine are enſnar'd, by which he hath caſt down many wounded, yea, many ſtrong Men have been ſlain by him. But 'tis againſt the

Melancholy and the Miſerable, againſt thoſe who are repining at the Courſe of Providence, and impatient under it, that he more directly plants his Batteries, and makes his formal Attacks. Upon theſe he makes his Approaches in ſomewhat the following manner: *Firſt*, he plies them continually with freſh Arguments and Motives to heighten and increaſe their Uneaſineſs and Diſcontent; and (if he can help it) won't ſuffer their Thoughts to dwell upon any thing elſe; and then ſuggeſts to them the Riddance of Life, as the only Expedient to get rid of their preſent Miſeries. At this, perhaps, they may ſtartle, and boggle for a time; but while they neglect to make a ſpeedy and vigorous Reſiſtance, he renews the Attack with greater force, takes from them by degrees all their Armour, in which they might have truſted, deſpoils them of the Shield of Faith (that beſt Defence againſt his fiery Darts) of the Helmet of Salvation, and the Sword of the Spirit; and having thus diſarm'd them of all their offenſive and defenſive Weapons, he makes an eaſy Prey of them, and leads them Captive at his Will. And now is it Courage to yield to ſuch an Enemy as this; to throw down our Arms without ſtriking one Blow, or making any vigorous reſiſtance, when we are ſure, by ſuch a Reſiſtance to make him flee before us *? Is it honourable to ſubmit to the baſeſt Slavery, when we may, by our Courage and Conſtancy, aſſert and maintain a moſt glorious Freedom? Let none then be tempted (by any confident Aſſertions or plauſible Inſinuations) to eſteem it any

* James 4. 7.

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part of Courage, Fortitude or Glory, to joyn with the grand Adverſary of Mankind, in the very worſt part of his Character; or to be employ'd in an Office that is peculiarly his, by a Preſcription almoſt as old as the World. If there be any thing of Courage and Fortitude in *Wilful Murther*, the Honour of it all belongs to him; and therefore let not Man aſſume what is the ſole Right and Property of the Devil. In fine, all that can be alledg'd to the contrary of what I have obſerv'd, is that ſeeming Appearance of Courage or Boldneſs, in the laſt Stroke or fatal Execution; which, whatever it be, is, I make no queſtion, to be aſcrib'd wholly to the Aids and Aſſiſtances of the Wicked One; who, as he firſt makes uſe of Mens want of true Courage, for the carrying on his murtherous Deſign, ſo he will be ſure to ſupply them with a competent Meaſure of Reſolution, when the dark and dreadful Hour is approaching.

By this time, I preſume, I have made it pretty evident, that there's nothing of true Courage, but a great deal of Cowardice in the Act of *Self-Murther*. But as the want of Courage will not always do the buſineſs, nor always anſwer the Devil's Intent, there muſt be ſomething of *Atheiſm* or *Infidelity*, to blind the Eyes of the Mind, and hinder the Self-Murtherer from looking beyond the Grave, or taking a view of the direful Conſequences of his fatal Purpoſe. Which is,

(2.) The other aſſignable Cauſe for the Frequency of this Fact; and which, I believe, will ſcarce be deny'd or diſputed by any; and therefore there will be the leſs occaſion for Enlargement. The Letter-

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writer's Repreſentation of *Philander's ruſhing out of Life, in the midſt of an affluent Income, with a chearful Heart, and without one particular Diſcontent*, is perfectly chimerical, and all over Romantick; ſince no ſuch Inſtance in a Chriſtian Country ever was, or ever can be. Nothing but a vehement Deſire of a Diſcharge from preſent Miſery, or of enjoying a greater Happineſs than this Life affords, can prompt a Man to commit ſuch a violent Act upon himſelf: But whoever is influenc'd by the former Motive, if he believes a future State of Rewards and Puniſhments, muſt know aſſuredly, that the method he is taking to get rid of Miſery, will only enlarge and perpetuate it; and that all he has ſuffer'd hitherto, is only the Beginning of Sorrows. And is it poſſible then, for a Man in his Wits, or with ſuch a ſenſe of things about him, cooly and deliberately to deſtroy himſelf? And then, for the other Motive, or Deſire of greater Happineſs, this is as impoſſible as the former: For whoever really and actually believes a future State, can't poſſibly be tempted by the Hopes or Deſire of a greater Happineſs in that State to commit Violence upon himſelf; becauſe he muſt be ſenſible at the ſame time, that hereby, inſtead of gaining his Point, and fulfilling his Deſire, he would deprive himſelf of the Happineſs he ſought, and diſappoint himſelf of the Hope he entertain'd: So that 'tis morally impoſſible for a Man endu'd with true Faith, ever to be guilty of this Crime. And of this, the old Murtherer of Mankind is ſo well aware, that whenever he tempts Men to be their own Executioners, he always takes care to keep the

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Curtain drawn, to cloſe the Eye of Faith (as Women ſhut, or turn away theirs when going to be bleeded) that ſo they may neither ſee, nor remember, nor conſider any thing of a future State. And as he cheated our Firſt Parents, with reſpect to the firſt Death, the Diſſolution of the Body, by his lying Aſſertion, *Ye ſhall not ſurely dye*; ſo he does the Self-Murtherer, by making him believe, without any grounds, that he ſhall not incur the ſecond Death, the Loſs of his Soul; whereas God has expreſsly declar'd, *At the hand of Man will I require the Life of Man* *, and conſequently of the Self-Murtherer his own Life; and the reaſon given, is, *for in the Image of God made he Man*, and this Image is deſtroy'd by the Self-Murtherer; and ſince he is not puniſhable by the Sword of Juſtice in this Life, he muſt fall into the hands of God, and be puniſh'd in the next. So that, of all Sinners, the Self-Murtherer is plainly the greateſt *Infidel*, as well as the greateſt *Coward*, ſince he has not ſufficient ſtrength of Mind to bear up under the little Evils of this World, that can hurt only the Body; and yet is ſo wretchedly blind, ſo ſtupidly ignorant, and ſo deſperately harden'd, as to ſet at nought the Threatenings of the Almighty, to *run upon the thick Boſſes of his Bucklers*, as *Job* ſpeaks †, and to defy, as it were, Omnipotent Vengeance to do its worſt upon him. Or if he has any Faith, or believes any thing of a future State, he may more properly be ſaid, than any other Sinner, *Vivus videnſque perire*, to have made a Covenant with Death and Hell, to court

* Gen. 9. 5. † Job 15. 26.

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Perdition, and to rush with open Eyes, into the bottomless Lake of Fire that never shall be quench'd. But as no Man can possibly choose Evil as Evil, but under the Appearance of some Good, 'tis more just and rational to suppose, that the Self-Murtherer has no sense at all of the future Terrors of the Lord, in that dreadful Hour of Tryal; but is given up (by the righteous Judgment of God) to strong Delusions, to believe whatever the Father of Lyes shall then suggest to him; that therefore he has no certain Persuasion of a Judgment to come, no actual Belief or Reflection, that any present Sin unrepented of is damnable, that this in particular is incapable of Repentance, and consequently of Pardon, or that the Remedy he is going to make use of will prove infinitely worse than the Disease it self, since it can serve to no other end than to make his Case immensely and irrecoverably wretched, and to translate him from Temporal to Eternal Torments.

Such is the forlorn and hopeless State of the Self-Murtherer, who is guilty of the most monstrous Absurdities both in Theory and Practice, thinking to obtain a Release from Misery, by making haste to arrive at the very Source and Region of all Misery, excluding himself from the Mercy of God, by shewing no Mercy to himself, flying ingloriously from little Dangers, and rushing unconcernedly into the most formidable Evils. So little Influence has that great and amazing Motive of the Gospel, the Threatening of Eternal Vengeance to the Impenitent, upon a Mind devoted to Self-Destruction. And

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yet this is the grand Motive and Argument ſtill; which (*whether* Men *will hear, or whether they will forbear*) ought ever to be urg'd on this occaſion; tho' I obſerve, that Religious Principles and Perſuaſives, even when moſt proper and requiſite, are now induſtriouſly laid aſide, to make way for philoſophical Reaſonings. The Author of the *Letter* under Conſideration attempts to diſſuade Men from *Suicide* by ſome Flouriſhes of Oratory, and artful Deſcants on the Will and Providence of God, which, however elegant or pleaſing to ſome, are no Armour of Proof in this caſe. To labour in the moſt beautiful Language, to convince a Man, under the moſt violent Temptation, of what he knows already, and tho' well known, has no force to hinder his Compliance, is betraying our Cauſe, and our Friend too. If we have nothing more forcible to urge, we had better be ſilent. There's not a Robber, Adulterer, or Murtherer, but knows full well, that he acts contrary to the Will of his Maker. Theſe things are manifeſt to all; and to tell either of theſe that he ought not to do what he does, becauſe 'tis diſpleaſing to God, and diſagreeable to his Will, ſignifies no more to ſuch Perſons, than if you ſhould tell a Mad-man that he acts and ſpeaks without Reaſon. In ſhort, there's not a Man (let him pretend what he will, or wink never ſo hard) but is convinc'd of the Obliquity and Sinfulneſs of ſuch Practices. But this Author, neglecting, or ſetting aſide all the powerful Diſſuaſives from Scripture, attacks the Self-Murtherer, or the Perſon under the Temptation of deſtroying himſelf, with this ſingle Argument, That he thwarts the Deſigns of Providence,

and acts contrary to the Will of his Creator, which (however good in it ſelf) will prove to ſuch a one, like the Bands and Withs of *Sampſon*, not able to tye his Hands, or prevent the Deſigns of the Wicked One upon him. But ſo it is, when Men pretend to be wiſer than God, deſpiſe his plain *Declarations* and *Denunciations* againſt Sin, and think their accurate and philoſophical way of Reaſoning has more Force and Power in it to reſtrain the Preſumption of Sinners, and the Exorbitancy of Vice, than the Thunder of his Words, and the Terror of his Judgments. Thoſe two ſhort Sentences, *Surely your Blood of your Lives will I require* *, and *Except ye repent, ye ſhall periſh* †, contain a greater Number of Arguments, and carry more Force and Energy in them, than a whole Volume of ſuch Reaſonings as this Author has produc'd. Not that I deny, however, but that he has ſet off the Argument he took in hand with Eloquence, and to advantage: But fine Words, and elegant Turns will not do the buſineſs here; there muſt be ſomething more keen and piercing, more ſolid and ſubſtantial. Old *Eli*'s Reproof was, no doubt, commendable in it ſelf; but apply'd to his two profligate Sons, prov'd too cold and lifeleſs to work a Reformation in them, or to ward off the Judgments of God from himſelf.

And as the Arguments of this Author againſt *Suicide* are lame, languid and defective in the moſt material Points of all; ſo the Advices and Directions that have been given by others in this Caſe, are not always ſo ſuitable to the Occaſion, as might be wiſh'd. What I chiefly blame in thoſe I have ſeen

* Gen. 9. 5. † Luke 13. 3.

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already, is, that they are either too tedious and prolix, ſtuff'd with too great a Variety of Arguments and Motives, and fitter to keep Men at a Diſtance from, than to relieve them under the Temtation; or not cloſe and applicable enough to the preſent Diſtreſs. To remedy both which Inconveniencies, as they appear to me, I ſhall lay down theſe three Directions, either of which by it ſelf, may poſſibly be ſufficient to repel the Temptation; but all together, I think, will be as a threefold Cord to bind the ſtrong Man, and hinder him from executing his murtherous Deſign. The Firſt is, That the Perſon tempted do make known to ſome Friend or other the Temptation he labours under of deſtroying himſelf; and that he deſire his Friend, not only to aſſiſt him in this dreadful Hour of Tryal, with his Counſel and beſt Advice; but that he ſet a Watch over him, and ſecure him (if poſſible) from yielding to the Temptation. *Secondly*, That he be ſure to continue to reſiſt the Temptation, to reſiſt even unto Blood, to reſiſt ſtill, tho' the Sollicitations of the Devil, and his own Inclinations be never ſo vehement upon him; becauſe by this means he is abſolutely ſure of a Victory at laſt. I don't doubt but that all Self-Murtherers have ſome ſtruggle with themſelves, and make ſomething of a reſiſtance at firſt; but then 'tis either too feeble, or too ſhort, they want a little more of Reſolution and Perſeverance. I remember, I have read ſomewhere of an eminently good Man (I think, 'twas *Luther*) that was under the moſt violent Temptation of this kind, and his Reaſon ſo clouded and over-power'd

by the preſſing and inceſſant Importunities of the Devil to diſpatch himſelf, that he was not in a Capacity of recollecting any other Argument, or uſing any other Paſſage of Scripture in this terrible Exigency, than this one ſhort Sentence, *Thou ſhalt not kill*, which he kept continually repeating, and by that means at laſt vanquiſh'd the Tempter. *Thirdly*, I would adviſe the Perſon under this Tryal, to apply himſelf moſt earneſtly to God by Prayer, (and if he has made his Caſe known to any Friend, to beg his Prayers likewiſe, and the Prayers of the Church) and if he do this ſincerely and perſeveringly (tho' otherwiſe never ſo imperfectly) I mean, with an hearty Deſire and Endeavour to get rid of the Temptation, I may venture to promiſe him, that he ſhall not fail of Succeſs. God will ſooner work a Miracle, than ſuffer ſuch a one to be foil'd by the Devil, who labours with all his Might, and begs the Aſſiſtance of Heaven to reſcue him from the Danger of committing a moſt grievous and damnable Sin. If a Man has this Armour by him in the Day of Tryal, there's no great fear of the Enemy; but if he neglects to provide, or to make uſe of it, there's no Remedy in Nature or Grace for him; but fall he muſt an eaſy Prey to the Deſtroyer, and a bloody Victim to his own Cowardice. While he keeps the Matter cloſe to himſelf; while he is tamely ſubmitting more and more every Day, or but faintly reſiſts the Aſſaults of the Tempter; while he neglects to pray for himſelf, or to deſire the Prayers of others for him, he is treading upon the very Brink of Eternal Ruin. 'Tis neceſſary ſurely in this moſt dan-

dangerous and important Combat, to *put on the whole Armour of God.* But at preſent I direct to no more than a ſtout and vigorous Reſiſtance, with the moſt ſure and certain Hope of Succeſs, founded on the Promiſe of God *; to the Advice of ſome pious and prudent Friend, in this arduous Affair, and moſt perplexing Exigency; and to the never-failing Prevalency of fervent Prayer. And as to this laſt, conſider particularly that Saying of our Saviour to *Peter*, Simon, Simon, *behold Satan hath deſired to have thee, and to ſift thee as Wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy Faith fail not* †. Without this Prayer he muſt have periſh'd; and by the Efficacy of this Prayer, he was, after his great Fall, reduc'd to a State of Repentance. *Judas* had no Prayer offer'd for him, and therefore fell into Deſpair, and from Deſpair into *Self-Deſtruction.* Had he confeſs'd his Sin to the Saviour of the World, and implor'd his Pardon and Mercy, 'tis poſſible he might have been ſav'd: But as his ſhameful Covetouſneſs when an Apoſtle, his wilful premeditated Treaſon againſt the Lord of Life, and his final Impenitency and Deſpair, render'd him the moſt accompliſh'd Sinner that ever was upon Earth; ſo, for the moſt exemplary Temporal Puniſhment, God ſuffer'd him to fall by his own Hands. Take heed then of filling up the Meaſure of your Iniquity and Miſery at once, by complying with this laſt Temptation: For a farther Security againſt which, I deſign (God willing) hereafter to ſubjoyn ſome few Conſiderations, and ſhort Forms of Prayer, ſuitable

* James 4. 7. † Luke 22. 31.

to

to the melancholy Occasion. In the mean while, the following Soliloquy or Meditation, may, by the Blessing of God (to which I recommend all that has been said) prove of some use and service to a Person labouring under this frightful Temptation: From which the good Lord deliver us all! *Amen.*

" I find, I have brought my self to the last degree " of Discontent; I am full of Heavinesss, and my " Heart is full of Trouble; my Life is become a " Burthen to me; I am weary of it, I loath it, I " abhor it. And what remedy can I find against " such grievous unwieldy Pressures? That which " is now propos'd, and urg'd vehemently upon me, " is a voluntary Death; but this is a Remedy pre- " scrib'd by my grand Adversary; not by the Phy- " sician, but by the Destroyer of Souls. This is a " Remedy ten thousand times worse than all that I " feel already. My Adversary the Devil, as a roaring " Lion, is now seeking to devour me, whom I am " commanded to resist steadfast in the Faith *, and " am confident, that if I so resist, he cannot hurt me; " because I have the Promise of him who is Truth " it self, that if I resist the Devil, he shall at last flee " from me †; and after such a Victory, all my " Discontents may flee away too; since these, no " doubt, are all highly aggravated and magnify'd " by this Disturber and Destroyer of Souls. On " the other hand, I know, I am utterly and irreco- " verably undone, if I comply; and yet the very

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* 1 Pet. 5. 9. † James 4. 7.

" Temp-

" Temptation is more grievous and uneasy to
" me, than all the other sad Circumstances put to-
" gether. However, if I get rid of That (as I
" am sure to do, by a vigorous Resistance) I may
" free my self from all at once. This will certain-
" ly engage the Divine Favour in my Rescue, De-
" liverance and Protection: If not, I had better
" perish by God's Hand, than by my own; better
" endure this Torment of Mind for ten or twenty
" Years together, than suffer the same, or infinitely
" worse, thro' a whole Eternity of Ages. For can
" I entertain such a vain Hope, or be guilty of
" such egregious Absurdity, as ever to imagine that
" I shall find rest to my Soul, or a Conclusion of
" my Misery, by an Action that will infallibly con-
" firm, enlarge and perpetuate it, without Remedy,
" without Measure, without End? No; I will re-
" sist, even unto Blood, and resist so long, till I
" have gain'd a final and complete Conquest.

DUEL-

DUELLING

The Effect of

Cowardice *and* Atheism.

AS the Observations already made on the foregoing Subject, concerning the Nature of *Courage* and *Cowardice*, and the Distinction between *Active* and *Passive* Courage, are, in a great measure, applicable to the Case of *Duelling*, my Work will be the shorter here: And therefore without repeating what has been said, I proceed directly to prove, in the first place, by some plain and positive Arguments, that *Duelling* is an Act and Instance of *Cowardice*. I would not be mistaken, however, as if I hereby intended to assert, that all Persons who are unfortunately engag'd in *Duels*, are naturally Cowards. No; tho' I had good reason and sufficient grounds to affirm this universally of all Self-Murtherers; I should speak contrary to my own Sentiments, if I presum'd to affirm the same of all Duellists: The Charge I bring, being not directly against the Persons, but against the Act; which always proceeds from Cowardice, as one principal Cause, tho' the Persons may not, except in this one particular Instance, be chargeable therewith. A

'tis no unusual thing, perhaps, for a real Coward to be engag'd in a Duel; so 'tis possible, if not, alas! too common, for a Man of true Bravery to act the Coward in this respect. A Comparison or two may make this plainer. *Eutrates*, a Person of strict Sobriety, and always upon his guard against all Temptations to Intemperance, was yet once in his Lifetime, by the pressing Importunity of some agreeable Company, overtaken in a downright Act of Drunkenness, which greatly endanger'd his Life. *Anorgus* is a Man of a very meek and mild Disposition, has a great Command of his Passions, and is never known to be ruffl'd or discompos'd by any outward Accident, or to resent any Injury, Affront or Provocation, except it be, when he is injuriously charg'd (contrary to all Truth and Modesty) with being a very hasty, passionate and angry Man. This groundless Calumny has indeed been observ'd more than once, to move him to a great degree, and to tempt him to discover (in this one particular Case) the very thing he is charg'd with. Let us now view the Duellist in the same Light. A Man of a truly brave and heroic Spirit, that scorns to do a mean or base thing, and yet can't brook the Name of *Coward*, or bear the thoughts of being so esteem'd, is in danger of being led away by the prepostrous Application, and magical Force of Words, to play the very Coward indeed. For since the neglecting to demand the modish Satisfaction of the Times for every petty, or seeming Offence, and refusing to stake Life and Soul at the Point of a Sword, in Answer to every Challenge that shall be given, is thought sufficient now-a-days (in defiance of all Sense and Rea-

ſon) to derive upon a Man, eſpecially a military Man, the odious and vilifying Appellation of a *Coward*; Men of true Honour and Fortitude, for want of due and timely Reflection, may ſoon be carry'd down the Stream of popular Error, and be apt to look upon That as a diſtinguiſhing Mark of Valor, which proceeds from nothing elſe but Littleneſs of Mind, and to aſcribe that to Puſillanimity, which is rather an Argument of true Greatneſs of Soul. For let the World think or ſay what it will, he is the trueſt Hero, who ſcorns to do an ill Thing, only to avoid an ill Name; as he is the Coward indeed, who leaves the Subſtance to catch at the Shadow, and hopes to avoid the Imputation of Cowardice, and to acquire the Reputation of Bravery, by doing what is become, indeed, too plauſible and faſhionable, but is, in reality, one of the baſeſt and moſt cowardly things in Nature. For ſuch, in truth, is every Inſtance of *Duelling*, as I ſhall now diſtinctly prove from the few following Conſiderations, which are principally calculated and intended for the Conviction and Service of thoſe of the Better Sort, who ſtill retain juſt Sentiments of Religion, Honour and Vertue; and not for the Rakes and Bullies of the Town, that are got beyond the reach of Argument. Theſe therefore, I leave out of the Queſtion; but with others I argue thus.

(1.) *Duelling* evidently diſcovers a want of Courage; becauſe 'tis a manifeſt Inconformity to the Divine Pattern; or an acting diametrically oppoſite to the Divine Goodneſs. *God is ſtrong and patient, and God is provoked every day* *. He has Strength

* Pſalm 7. 12.

and

and Power, and (if I might be allow'd the Expreſſion) Courage enough to avenge himſelf of his greateſt Adverſaries; and yet he forbears them, and exerciſes much Long-ſuffering towards them. He does not take preſent advantage againſt them, but gives them time to bethink and recollect themſelves, to ſue for Pardon, and make their Peace. Now there is no Quality commendable in Man, but what is a Copy or Imitation of ſome divine Perfection; and as God is the Fountain of all Honour, ſo every Man is ſo far honourable, and no farther, than as he is, more or leſs, conformable to this Supreme Pattern of all Excellency and Perfection; no farther, than as in ſome meaſure he repreſents God; even as an inferiour Magiſtrate is no farther honourable, in a civil reſpect, than as he partakes of the Power, and repreſents the Perſon of the King. But now, even in God himſelf, no Attribute appears ſo lovely, or ſo gloriouſly, as his *Mercy* or *Goodneſs*. This is that Perfection of his, which is of greateſt Excellence: This is his Grandeur and his Glory, and that which he moſt glories in, and is moſt concern'd to vindicate; and that too, wherein a patient and merciful Man does more particularly reſemble him. And therefore (as an ingenious Author obſerves) the Court of Honour muſt not take it amiſs, if upon this account we conclude the good and merciful Man more truly Honourable, than any of thoſe, who upon the ſcore of Birth, Quality, Fortune, or any other Pretence, aſſume that Title. All the other Sons of Honour repreſent ſome lower Perfections of God; as the Man of Knowledge and Learning

represents the Wisdom of God, the Man of Quality his Greatness, the Man of Strength his Power, and the Man of Authority his Regality; but the patient and merciful Man represents the Morality of his Nature, his Goodness and Righteousness; which is the Flower of his Perfections, that which brings most Honour and Glory to himself, and consequently to the Man who in this part resembles him. But when Men contend in mutual Affronts, and when the Thing each aims at, is to have the Blood and Life of his Antagonist, where is the Honour of such Contention * ? Is this to seek the Honour that cometh from God only, who is the Fountain of all Honour? Is this acting in conformity to the Pattern of their Heavenly Father, *who maketh his Sun to rise on the Evil and on the Good, and sendeth Rain on the Just and on the Unjust?*

(2.) The Duellist may be argu'd of want of Honour and Courage, from his Nonconformity to the Example of his Prince. 'Tis a Princely Thing to pass by a Transgression; and the Laws of our Land which adjudge and proportion Punishments to the Nature, Quality, and Demerits of every Crime, do not inflict any greater Penalty on those who are guilty of slanderous, opprobrious or contumelious Words against the Person and Dignity of the King's Majesty, or against any other Words, short of High Treason, than Fine or Imprisonment, or the like. And how common is it for Kings to pardon their Subjects, even for downright Treason and Rebelli-

* Si utrinque certabitur, ille est melior, qui prior pedem retulit: victus est, qui vicit. *Salust. Jugurth.*

on?

on? And shall Subjects think themselves more Honourable than their Prince, from whom all Civil Honour is deriv'd? Shall they think themselves oblig'd to insist on higher Satisfaction, for a touch upon their Honour, than their injur'd Sovereign requires for an Assault upon his? Shall the King himself, and the whole Legislature, think his Honour sufficiently repair'd and vindicated, by punishing the Offender with *Banishment*, *Fine*, *Imprisonment*, or *Pillory*; and shall private Gentlemen for private Affronts, demand no less Satisfaction than Life it self? In a Word, shall a King judge it reasonable, sometimes to pass by the vilest Abuses, and think it no Reflection upon his Honour or Impeachment of his Fortitude, even to pardon downright Insults, and violent Attempts upon his Crown and Dignity; and shall it be deem'd an Instance of Cowardice and Pusillanimity in any of his faithful and loyal Subjects, to exercise the same Lenity and Clemency, or to imitate, in this respect, the Royal Pattern? The very Case of a King's pardoning sometimes the surviving Duellist, that has, perhaps, violently taken from him a valuable Subject, ought to shame these Men out of their fatal Resolutions to avenge themselves for every trifling *Peccadillo*.

(3.) *Duelling* must be Cowardly and Dishonourable, because 'tis an illegal, unjust, and insolent Act; as being not only a violent *Assault and Battery* upon the Laws of the Land, and the Liberty of the Subject; but likewise a barefac'd Insult and Usurpation upon the highest Prerogative of the Crown. God Almighty has thought fit to lodge in the Hands of

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Sovereign Princes, and in theirs only, the Power of Life and Death. This is the great Charter of Providence to Crown'd Heads, the unalienable Right and peculiar Property of Kings, the ſacred Badge and moſt diſtinguiſhing Mark of Royalty. And therefore whoever ſhall dare to wreſt the Sword of Juſtice out of their hands, and make uſe of it in a private way, is guilty of a ſacrilegious Invaſion of that awful Truſt, and divine Power, which the Supreme Magiſtrate alone is inveſted with. And 'tis this that makes all *Reſiſtance* and *Regicide* to be attended with ſuch flaming and monſtrous Aggravations of Guilt. But *Duelling* is not only an aſſuming this higheſt Power, without any Warrant or Commiſſion; but has likewiſe a direct Tendency to overthrow and deſtroy that great and invaluable Privilege (the Glory and Boaſt of the *Engliſh* Nation) the Law of being try'd, in all Criminal or Actionable Caſes, by our Peers, or by a Jury of twelve Men. For if Men may arbitrarily ſet up themſelves for Judges and Executioners in their own Cauſe, and eſpecially in ſo nice and tender a Point, as that of Life and Death, what will become, at this rate, of the *Engliſh* Honour and the *Engliſh* Rights, of Law and Juſtice, Liberty and Property, and every thing that is dear and valuable to us as Men and as Chriſtians? But ſuch Outrages and Violations of the Law of Nature and of Nations, and of our own moſt excellent Laws in particular, are more proper for the Conſideration and Animadverſion of my Superiours; and there I refer them *. All I have

* *See Diſſertation concerning the Evil Nature, and Fatal Conſequence of immoderate Anger and Revenge, by* T. S. *from* p. 83, to

to ſay or prove under this Head, is, That no *Act of Violence* or *Injuſtice* ought ever to be deem'd an *Act of Courage* *.

(4.) *Duelling* ſpeaks Cowardice; becauſe 'tis not intended againſt a common Enemy (where true Valor only is to be ſeen) but againſt a Friend, an Acquaintance, or a Companion (for 'tis always at ſome friendly Meeting that theſe Quarrels ariſe.) And how ungenerous is it to make a Friend an Offender for a Word, and then to think nothing leſs than Stabbing can attone for the Offence? I'll leave the Reader to judge farther of the Couragiouſneſs or Cowardice of this Practice, from the following remarkable Story. ------ A Captain in the Reign of K. *W.* had made a Practice of pocketing all the Challenges that were ſent him, and took no farther notice of them. An officious Courtier one day complaining of this before the King, the Captain was ſent for, in order to clear himſelf, or be diſcharg'd. When he came, the King repreſenting the Caſe to him, ask'd him whether 'twas true or not; and if true, whether he thought himſelf fit to be employ'd againſt the common Enemy, that had not the heart to engage a ſingle Man? The Officer boldly reply'd, that he was not aſham'd to own the Fact, and produc'd ſome Challenges then in his Pocket, which he had not anſwer'd, and which, he ſaid, he never would; but

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to the End. The whole is well worth the Peruſal, and may ſerve to ſupply the Defects of this Tract.

* Nihil honeſtum eſſe poteſt, quod Juſtitiâ vacat. —— Fortes igitur & Magnanimi ſunt habendi, non qui faciunt, ſed qui propulſant injuriam. *Cic. de Off. lib.* 1. §. 19.

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added withal, that if his Majesty question'd his Courage, he was prepar'd to give the utmost Proof of it in a lawful and honourable Way; that he was ready at all times to obey the Commands of his Prince, and to serve his Country in any the most difficult and hazardous Undertaking. The King hereupon order'd him to attend the Siege of a certain Place, and by farther Orders in private, gave charge to the commanding Officer, when he was ready for a General Storm, to place this Man in the Front, and put him upon scaling the Walls of the Town. The Event was, the Town was storm'd, and the Man behav'd so gallantly, with so much Intrepidity, Valor and Success, that the King soon advanc'd him to a higher Post, and he liv'd ever after in the greatest Honour and Esteem, without being call'd upon any more for that little ungenerous Proof of Courage, which the merest Coward can demand and give, but none but the true Hero can dare to refuse. For such is the bewitching Nature of Custom, and such the Dread of Singularity, among the politer Part of the World, especially in a Point that is generally thought (how groundlesly soever) to bring a Man's Courage in question, that it requires great Strength and Presence of Mind, to be able to despise the Censure, and singly to withstand the Current of the Times. And 'tis to the want of such a Generous and Noble Spirit, that the Frequency of *Duelling* now-a-days is chiefly to be ascrib'd. For, to trace this Evil to its original Source, we can't but observe, that 'tis most commonly in the Heat of Passion, or in the Heat of Liquor, that all Challenges are made

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and accepted; and when once the Word is given and taken, tho' afterwards, upon cool and ſecond Thoughts, both Parties would be glad to be off, and thank the Friend that would diſengage 'em (as, I don't doubt, is many times the Caſe;) yet for fear of incurring the Imputation of *Cowardice* (which is now moſt abſurdly charg'd, not on the *Duelliſt*, but on him that declines the *Duel*) they both proceed, for want of ſome ſeaſonable Mediation, to act the moſt Cowardly Part in the World; to act againſt God, their King, their Country, their Friend, their trueſt Honour, their higheſt Intereſt; yea, againſt the Convictions of their own Conſciences; nay, againſt the Inclinations of their own Hearts; the offended Party, perhaps, willing to forgive, and the Offender to ask Pardon, and both deſirous to be reconcil'd, and to live in Peace and Friendſhip ever after; and yet they proceed (*O aſtoniſhing Infatuation!*) with all theſe tender Sentiments upon them, and all the good Wiſhes to each other, to hang out falſe Colours of Bravery and Hoſtility; and under this Diſguiſe, do to the ſtrangeſt and moſt unnatural Act, even to aſſault one another as the greateſt Enemies, when all the while they are really no other than Friends; and ſo they would both appear to be, had they but Courage enough to quit their falſe Notions of *Honour*, and to diſcloſe to each other the inward Senſe of their Souls. For, in ſhort, they fight in Maſquerade, and appear to be what they are not.

To put ſome ſtop to ſuch unnatural Proceedings, I would propoſe two Things to the Gentlemen of the Sword; and they are, I preſume, no immodeſt or unreaſonable Propoſals; but a Medium offer'd to

ſalve their Honour, and at the ſame time hinder the ſhedding of Blood. One is, That it ought to be a ſtanding Rule with all Perſons of a liberal Education, never at a friendly Meeting (whatever Provocations may happen) to draw a Sword, or give a Challenge. If Gentlemen at Gaming ſhould ſuffer themſelves to be ruffl'd and tranſported with Paſſion, becauſe the Fortune of the Cards or Dice turns againſt them, they would be hiſs'd, if not kick'd out of Company. And certainly there is as much Decorum requir'd in Converſation, as at Gaming. And were the Rule I propoſe, but once brought into faſhion (as there is all the reaſon in the World it ſhould) Converſation would ſoon regain its antient Freedom, and become more eaſie, agreeable and inoffenſive; and Differences of Opinion and warm Diſputes, would not then end (as they now too commonly do) in Violence and Bloodſhed. The other thing I would propoſe, is this, That when Differences happen to be carry'd to a great Height, and one Perſon thinks himſelf affronted, abus'd or injur'd by another, no other Satisfaction ſhall be demanded or allow'd, than what ſhall be given at a Reference, the offended Party to have the liberty to chooſe one Referee, and the reputed Offender another, and the Government (if they would vouchſafe to interpoſe) to have the Option of a third. And thus all Verbal Treſpaſſes in Company, and all Reparations of Perſonal Injuries or Abuſes might eaſily be corrected and determin'd. And truly, were ſome ſuch Method as this Legally eſtabliſh'd, and duly obſerv'd, how much Scandal might be prevented, how much Hazard and Danger

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avoided, and how much Noble and Innocent Blood be preſerv'd? But if the want of an effectual Reſtraint for this Enormity, muſt ſtill remain a Diſgrace to our Nation, and a Defect in our Laws, this however might, in ſome meaſure, be ſupply'd in a private way. If Men of diſtinguiſh'd Worth and Bravery would agree, and reſolve never to give or accept a Challenge, never to draw their Swords in a private Quarrel, or in the heat of Paſſion, but only when violently aſſaulted, or in their own neceſſary Defence; this would be a means of retrieving the preſent (otherwiſe) declining Honour of the *Britiſh* Nobility and Gentry; and go a great way towards diſcountenancing and ſuppreſſing the vile and ſenſeleſs Cuſtom of *Duelling*. For were this once abandon'd by the *Men of Merit*, and turn'd over wholly to the ſcandalous Tribe of *Libertines* and *Debauchees*, whoſe *Mouths are full of Curſing and Bitterneſs*, as their *Feet and Hands are* as *ſwift to ſhed Blood*, the Practice would ſoon become infamous, and ſink under the Burthen of its own Shame. But when Men of Vertue and Renown ſhall, by ſometimes complying with the ſcurvy Faſhion, do what in them lies, to juſtify and dignify the Action, 'tis not in the power of Rhetorick or of Laws to ſtem the Torrent. All that Gentlemen have, or can pretend to ſay in this caſe, is, that they may think their Character lies at ſtake, if, when challeng'd, they decline the Combat: But ſure, if a Man can give no better Proof of his being no Coward, he has very little to do with the Court of Honour. For the Modern Practice of *Duelling* founds no better Title to Valor, than that of *Common Swearing*. The Man that ſwears and curſes

luſtily, does it, no doubt, to ſhew his Authority over his Inferiors, or that he may paſs more currently for a Man of Mettle; and ſo the common Duelliſt, as he generally vents his Curſes too before he draws his Sword; ſo his principal Aim is, not ſo much to give or obtain what he calls *Satisfaction*, as to proclaim his pretended Gallantry to the World. But ſuch Feats of Gallantry, both in the hectoring Damner, and the forward Challenger, ſhew a Man's Natural Courage no more, than a high Shoe does his Natural Tallneſs. They are both foreign and affected; and 'tis pity but ſuch ſcandalous Affectations of Bravery were always confin'd to their proper Places, and never to be ſeen any where elſe but in the *Bear-Garden* and *Brandy-Shop*. I ſhall only obſerve farther under this Head, that 'tis ſomewhat ſtrange, that the Scholar ſhould gain an Honour from that which derives an Infamy upon the Maſter: 'Tis certain, that there is no Employment of leſs Eſteem in the World, than *Teaching to Fence*, and no Perſons treated with greater Contempt, than common *Fencing-Maſters*; and yet a Gentleman, by being skill'd in the *Noble Science of Defence* (as 'tis prepoſterouſly call'd) ſhall gain more Honour, in the Opinion of ſome, than either his Birth, or Quality, or Fortune, or Station could have given him without it. But to what end or purpoſe is this Art of Fencing? Or what other Name does it deſerve, than the Art of Murthering? 'Tis of little or no uſe againſt a common Enemy; 'tis of no ſervice in the Field of Battel, and only teaches Inferiors, after ſome little Progreſs in the Fencing-School, to inſult their Superiors that have been better employ'd, prompting Men

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of narrow Souls and deſperate Fortunes, that are skill'd that way, to abuſe and ſacrifice the Brave, for want of that Skill. In ſhort, it ſerves to no other End, that I know of, than only to make Men always upon the point of quarrelling with their Friends, and to keep up a continual Civil War among our ſelves.

(5.) *Duelling* muſt be an Act of Cowardice, becauſe it moſt commonly proceeds from *Paſſion*, and is too often an *Act of Revenge*. Of the Force of this Argument, there is not, perhaps, a more convincing Teſtimony, than that the weaker Veſſels are generally the fulleſt fraught with this turbulent Paſſion; and that none are more revengeful than the Female Sex. But, not to enlarge on ſo invidious a Topick, I ſhall give the Argument another turn, in the beautiful Language of a late ingenious Author before-cited *. "A Proneneſs to Anger argues a Weakneſs of Mind: For notwithſtanding it ſeems to proceed from a Conſciouſneſs of injur'd and neglected Worth, and by the Noiſe and Bluſter it makes, would perſuade us, that there was ſome brave and magnanimous Quality in it; yet, if we examine it, we ſhall find a Storm every whit as Heroic as this Paſſion, that all this Swelling is more Tympany than Greatneſs, a Diſeaſe rather than any natural extraordinary Growth of the Mind. The Quickneſs of this Paſſion reſembles the Motion of Children and decrepit Perſons, who run when they ſhould go; which proceeds not from Strength and Vi-

* Collier's *Serm. p.* 194. *2d Edit.*

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"gor, but Infirmity. And as it is an Argument "of a tender unhealthy Conſtitution, not to be able "to endure the freſh Air, without Inconvenience, "and to be put into Diſorder by every little Acci-"dent; ſo to be diſquieted upon every petty Oc-"caſion, becauſe every thing is not ſpoken or act-"ed according as a nice and undiſcerning Fancy ex-"pects, is a ſign of a diſtemper'd Mind, which is "hurt with the leaſt Touch, and wounded with the "ſhadow of an Injury: A Mind which has no pro-"per ſtrength of its own to ſupport its Quiet and "Happineſs, but depends upon the uncertain De-"portment of others. And accordingly we find "by experience, that Children, Sick, Diſcontent-"ed, and very aged Perſons, *i. e.* the weak, diſor-"der'd, and decay'd part of Mortals are moſt ſub-"ject to this Paſſion; and as an Inclinableneſs to "this Paſſion argues Weakneſs in us, ſo if we in-"dulge our ſelves in it, it will make us ſtill wea-"ker."

To this let me add, that whatever is done with moſt Difficulty, requires and ſhews more Courage than that which is done with leſs. Now to bridle and conquer our Paſſion, to pardon Offences, or ask Pardon for them is a much harder Task, than to give vent to the One, and to revenge and vindicate the Other; for this is no more than what Nature and Inclination prompt Men to.

(6.) And *Laſtly*, *Duelling* is a plain Argument of Cowardice, becauſe 'tis an Act of Cruelty. Now whatever other Notion there may be of Cruelty, this is certainly one, when we puniſh others be-

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yond their Deserts, or when the Nature of the Punishment far exceeds the Demerits of the Crime. To take away the Life of a Man for a Word speaking, what is this? Call it *Anger*, call it *Revenge*, call it *Cruelty*, or whatever else you please; but call it not *Courage*. Let not that Noble Vertue, which, when once separated from Mercifulness, must degenerate into Vice, bear the Odium of so foul, so unjust, so barbarous an Act. Besides, at this rate, a Man is liable, by a foolish Word, or passionate Expression, or some slight Reflection, to be robb'd in a Moment, and for ever, of the Enjoyment, not of this Life only, but of a better. But how is this consistent with Honour or with Courage? The most notorious and the most scandalous Malefactors, are seldom known in any civiliz'd, or even barbarous Country, to be executed as soon as condemn'd; but they have most commonly Space allow'd them to prepare for another World. None but Ruffians, Highwaymen, Footpads, House-breakers and the like, that dispatch a Man without Warning. And when we hear of such a Fact, does not our Blood thrill within us? Do not our Hearts rise up against such harden'd Villains, so perfectly void of all Humanity? And shall Gentlemen imitate that rascally Herd in this? Shall *Protestants* act like the merciless *Jesuits* at *Thorn*; and for less than a pretended Riot, endeavour, as it were, to damn the Soul of their Friend, as well as murther his Body? Shall Loyalists make no scruple to rob the King of his Subjects, and render themselves so unlike the Pattern he sets them, and so unworthy the Favour he

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beſtows on them? But I forget that I am to prove,

In the Second Place, That *Duelling* could not have gain'd ſuch Footing in this Nation, as it has, were it not ſupported by the Principles of *Atheiſm*. I do not ſay, or mean, that all who engage in theſe dangerous and deſperate Attempts, are downright habitual Atheiſts, either in Practice or Speculation (tho' the general Infidelity of the Age, as well as the peculiar Infidelity viſible in this Practice, might almoſt tempt one to bring in ſuch a Charge.) But this I affirm, that their Paſſion or Revenge, or Fear of Diſgrace, takes from 'em at that time all Senſe of God and Religion, and a future State, that they have no Thought of God, and no Fear of God before their Eyes: (and our Laws ſay, and ſuppoſe no worſe of the vileſt Malefactors) They have, in ſhort, no more Thought, no more Fear of God, than if there was no ſuch Being in the World.

How many Gentlemen are there of fine Parts, great Probity, and unſpotted Character in other reſpects, of an excellent Temper, and moſt obliging Converſation, greatly belov'd, and highly ſerviceable to all about them, that would ſtill be an Ornament and a Support to their Country, were it not for this Deviliſh Point of Honour (I can call it no other; for 'tis an Idol that none but the Devil could ſo eaſily ſet up, and ſo long ſecure in the Hearts of Men) that robs them of all their Wiſdom, and all their Vertue at once; that makes them inſenſible of the moſt formidable Dangers, blind to all the alluring Charms of true Honour and ſubſtantial Happineſs, deaf to all the moving Rhetorick of piteous Cries and ſobbing Complaints; to the ſoft Whiſpers

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of their own Conscience, and the loud Menaces of an avenging God, untouch'd at the Calamities they are pulling down upon themselves and others, lost to all Reflections on the shocking Consequence of their desperate Rashness, to all Remembrance of the approaching inconsolable Grief of Friends and Relations, when, neither fearing God, nor regarding Man, by one bloody Act, they cut themselves off in the midst of their Days, from all Right and Title to present and future Glory, from being farther serviceable to their King and Country, to themselves and Relations; yea, from all Possibility of Repentance, from all Desire of Pardon, from all Hopes of Salvation.

If these be Men of Vertue and Honour, of Courage and Fortitude, 'tis time to cashier the Distinctions of Good and Evil: After this, let all Contradictions be reconcil'd; let Light be cloth'd with Sables, and Darkness put on the Brightness and Serenity of the Day; let Ruffians wear the Ensigns of Honour, and Desperadoes be enroll'd in the Annals of Fame; let there be no more Dispute about the Nature and Merit of Actions; but let all things be just as every Man's Fancy or Humour paints them.

Some Reflections on the Modern Practice of Inoculation.

THIS Practice ſeems now to be at ſome ſtand, to have loſt much of its former Credit, and to have contracted an Imbecility (like that it gives) in proportion to its Growth in Years; and this, perhaps, more from the Conſideration of the natural ill Conſequences that are now found to attend it (which I leave to the Examination of the Phyſicians) than of any Moral Evil or Obliquity in the Practice it ſelf; which is the principal Thing I ſhall regard, in the few following Obſervations, as being of the greateſt Moment, and that which has hitherto, perhaps, been leaſt conſider'd. However, with Leave of the Honourable College, I ſhall juſt obſerve,

In the firſt place, That the Practice of *Inoculation* is utterly unjuſtifiable by the Rules and Laws of Phyſick. For skilful and honeſt Phyſicians never preſume to tamper with Life, but when there are no hopes of Recovery; and then deſperate Caſes may lawfully admit of deſperate Remedies; then they'll bring on one Diſeaſe to deſtroy another, a leſs dangerous to expel a greater: But never ſince Phyſick or Phyſicians were heard of, has it ever been known

known before, to inflict a Mortal Diſeaſe upon a Healthy Perſon. No; that is God's Prerogative; and I have more Charity for the Learned in that Science, than to ſuppoſe, that either they themſelves will ever invade a Province which is confeſſedly Divine, or ever countenance thoſe that do. But 'tis ſomewhat farther remarkable, that this new Diſcovery is founded altogether upon Uncertainties, and drawn into Practice from three very precarious Suppoſitions. 1. That the *inoculated* Party muſt certainly have the *Small Pox* in the Natural Way; 2. That if he has them, he will certainly die, or be frightfully mark'd: 3. That he will certainly recover, and be in no farther Danger after *Inoculation*. Upon theſe ſuppos'd Certainties, but manifeſt Uncertainties, this fatal Practice has hitherto been carry'd on. For much the ſame reaſon we may *inoculate* the *Plague* (eſpecially when 'tis drawing towards us, as 'twas lately from *France.*) For 'tis not certain, whether a Perſon ſo *inoculated* will die; nor is it certain, in the preſent Caſe, whether the Perſon will recover. There is no more than a Probability, or Suppoſal on either ſide; but a Certainty on neither. And if Health and Life muſt be tamper'd with, on ſuch Contingencies and Poſſibilities, no one can tell where this will end. As this Age is wonderfully improv'd in moſt kinds of Inventions and Experiments, who knows but the next may out-ſtrip us in ſomething ſtill more bold and daring? I would not willingly pave the Way to any thing of this kind, or ſuggeſt what may be miſunderſtood or miſapply'd. However, I believe, I may truſt the following ſingular Inſtance, which is really parallel

(tho' in a much higher Degree) to the Caſe in hand, with moſt of the preſent Generation. —*Euſebia*, a Woman fam'd for her maternal Affection, as well as pious Diſpoſition, being extremely concern'd for the future, as well as preſent Welfare of an only Daughter, nay, indifferent as to the fleeting tranſitory Duration of this Life, and only, or principally ſollicitous for her everlaſting Happineſs in the next, began (under this anxious Concern, and fearful Miſgivings about her Child's Salvation) to reaſon thus with her ſelf. "This Child, the Joy of my "Eyes, and the Delight of my Heart, whom I "ſhould be wonderfully pleas'd to ſee happy in "this World, but infinitely more, in the other, is "now unſully'd with Vice, and as innocent, per-"haps, as ever ſhe will be: But when grown up, and "launch'd abroad, into the great World, in the ut-"moſt danger of being drawn aſide by an infinite "Variety of Temptations, and I perhaps not alive "to uſe my Authority and Advice, and ſo may be "loſt and undone for ever. What ſhall I do now "in this Streight, to ſecure this Child from periſh-"ing? If I ſacrifice her to God in the Bloom of "her Innocence, ſhe will undoubtedly be ſav'd. I "will therefore make ſure of her Happineſs once "for all: And tho' I may appear in the Eye of the "World (if once diſcover'd) to do a monſtrous un-"natural Act, I'll not expoſe my Child to farther "Danger, when 'tis in my power to prevent it; "but immediately diſpatch her to Heaven, and "make her Eternal Felicity ſure and certain". And what now ſhould hinder a fond and pious Mother under ſuch Concern, and ſuch Sentiments, to act in this

this manner? You'll ſay, perhaps, the Voice of Nature and the Voice of God loudly remonſtrate againſt ſuch a Perpetration. 'Tis true; but upon a Compariſon of the two Caſes, does not the *inoculating* Parent, in many particulars, exactly reſemble this? The one fears a Miſcarriage in the next World, the other in this: To prevent which, the one does an unnatural Act, and ſo does the other; the one ruines her ſelf to ſave her Child from Eternal Damnation, the other does what ſhe can never juſtify before God and her own Conſcience, to preſerve hers a little longer in a miſerable State. Both are acted by kind and commendable Intentions. Both aim at a good End; but then the Means of both are utterly faulty and unjuſtifiable. The only Difference between them is, that the former is more certain of Salvation, than the other is of the Life of her Child: The one depending upon expreſs Promiſes, and a formal Covenant between God and Man, the other upon mere Conjectures, and the moſt ſlippery Contingencies in Nature. But now againſt this, and all other Suppoſitions of the like kind, that Apoſtolical Rule will ever ſtand obligatory, We muſt not *do Evil that Good may come* of it *; no, not the leaſt Evil for the ſake of the greateſt Good. But not to enter into cloſe Argument upon this Point, which may not be ſo convincing or agreeable to thoſe of the weaker Sex, who are ſuppos'd to be the greateſt Encouragers of the Practice I am writing againſt, it may be more to the purpoſe to give the following low Inſtance, in Proof and Illuſtration of St. *Paul*'s Meaning. Surfeits, we know, as they often threaten our Life; ſo they do create

* Rom. 3, 8.

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in us an Averſion, for ſome time, at leaſt, againſt whatever Meat or Drink it was that gave us the Surfeit. ——— Suppoſe then, a ſober young Man, at his firſt ſetting out in the World, ſhould have a ſtrong Perſuaſion, that by once getting drunk, he ſhould take ſo thorough a Surfeit, and be ſo perfectly cur'd of that noiſome ſcandalous Vice, as never to be guilty of the like again. Would this be ſufficient, think you, to excuſe the ſinful Experiment? And tho' he makes himſelf drunk with no other deſign, than to give himſelf a Loathing and Antipathy to Drunkenneſs ever after; yet, ſhould he happen to miſcarry, or be taken off in this drunken Fit, or contract thereby a Fever, or any other Diſtemper that ſhould prove fatal to him, he would certainly be accountable before God for his own Death. And doubtleſs, to inflict a mortal Diſeaſe upon a well-Perſon (let the Intention be never ſo good) is as criminal in the ſight of God, as wilfully and deſignedly to get drunk. For,

(2.) That Divine Prohibition, *Thou ſhalt not kill*, which has been written in the Hearts of Men from the Beginning, reaches every Act and Purpoſe of Mankind, that has any the leaſt Tendency (whether directly or remotely) to deſtroy the Life of Man, and ſpoil the Image of God. And how then any Perſon that brings upon a Child of his own what he knows to be of a killing Nature, and what has been found, by frequent and ſad Experience, to have had a fatal Effect, can think himſelf entirely innocent or free from Blood-guiltineſs in the ſight of God, I can't imagine. Our Law allows of no Acceſſary in Murther. And can Parents then be acceſſary

ſary to the Death of their Children, and yet be guiltleſs? Or can they make uſe of deſtructive Means, and knowingly faſten on others a mortiferous Infection (let the Intention, or the Effect be what it will) without a manifeſt Breach of the ſixth Commandment? Whatever be the natural Conſequence of any one unlawful Act, the Perſon guilty of the unlawful Act, is chargeable likewiſe with the Conſequence, by the juſt and righteous Laws of God: And therefore whoever ſhall take upon him cooly and deliberately to invade God's Prerogative, and out of a mere Diſtruſt of his Providence, to bring upon another a mortal Diſeaſe, at ſome more convenient and favourable time, in his Opinion, that he may avoid it in a more dangerous Juncture, is chargeable with That, which is the Natural, and not unfrequently the Real Conſequence of ſuch an Act. And accordingly, the Laws of our Land, tho' not directly and expreſly, do yet obliquely and conſequentially, condemn this as Murther. For not only maiming, hurting or wounding another, if ſo be he dies within a Year and a Day; but even the laying a ſick Man in the cold Air againſt his Will, by reaſon whereof he dieth, is deem'd Murther in the Eye of the Law. And if to expoſe a ſick Man to the Inclemency of the Air, ſo as that it becomes mortal to him, is chargeable with the Guilt of Murther, what is it to inflict a mortal Diſeaſe upon a Perſon in Health, and that too, perhaps, ſometimes much againſt his Will and Inclination, or at leaſt, before the Perſon be come to Years of Diſcretion, to know or apprehend the Danger, which, 'tis to be preſum'd, he would

would never consent to, if he did? But here, I suppose, it will be answer'd, that the former is with Malice and Fore-thought, otherwise it is not Murther by Law; and this is done, not with a Design to destroy, but to save Life. I allow it is; but then 'tis not the Intention that can alter the nature of the Act: And tho' I grant that the Laws of Men do not reach this Case; yet it may not be less criminal in the Sight of God, nor less cognizable *in Foro Conscientiæ*; especially, since Persons faulty in this respect can't be Ignorant, that this Practice has sometimes prov'd fatal in the Event: And if they knew the hidden Sorrows, and inward Agonies of those Parents, that have been accessary this way to the untimely Death of their Children, who would not, be sure, commit the same again, to gain the whole World; they would scarce be tempted to seek the Life of theirs by such unwarrantable and unlawful Means.

I might argue this Point farther, from the additional Guilt of multiplying and spreading the Infection wider by this means; from the probable Judgment of God, in making it more fatal than ever; and from some visible, and more than ordinary Marks of Divine Displeasure, in Persons that have died under *Inoculation*, as if design'd on purpose to deter Men from it; and if still continu'd in, may be a means, among other great Provocations, of drawing down some signal Judgments on this sinful Nation: But there's no need, in this case of any Descant. If the Thing be evil, or unlawful in it self (and I defy the the greatest Master of Reason and Rhetorick to

prove it to be otherwiſe) 'tis not all the Succeſs we can deſire, nor all the faireſt Circumſtances in the World, that can juſtify the Fact, tho' they may ſerve to recommend it to unholy and unthinking Perſons. 'Tis not, in ſhort, to be done with a ſafe Conſcience, upon any Account, or any Conſideration whatſoever; not for the ſake of the deareſt Child upon Earth, not for the Security of a whole Family, not for the ſaving of a Town or City, not for the Preſervation of a Kingdom, not for the Salvation of all Mankind.

I ſhall cloſe my Remarks on this Head, with the natural and affecting Sentiments of a very tender, but conſcientious Mother.

Sophronia having been long under Suſpence and Anxiety about *inoculating* a darling Daughter, at laſt debates the Caſe with herſelf after this manner:

" I am preſs'd upon by the Importunity of Friends, by " the common Practice of the Times, by the general good " Succeſs of that Practice, and by the natural and earneſt " Deſire I have of ſeeing my Daughter paſt the Danger " of the *Small Pox*, to have her *inoculated* at this " time: And what can I ſay, or how ſhall I act in this " caſe? If I defer the Operation, I muſt ſtill live on in " perpetual Fear my ſelf, and expoſe my Child every " Day to the common Infection. Is it not lawful and " prudent to uſe the moſt likely means to preſerve her " Life; at leaſt, to ſecure her from one of the moſt con- " tagious and moſt fatal of all Diſtempers? The Succeſs " recommends the Practice.----- But I don't hear yet " of any Divines that have recommended or try'd the " Experiment. Phyſicians aſſure me, that ſcarce One in " Forty dies in this Way. ----- But ſuppoſe my Child " ſhould be that One. I can't but have ſuch a Thought, " and tremble too at the Thought of it. 'Tis no impoſ- " ſible Caſe; it has been the ſad Caſe of many already, " and may be mine too, if I make the Experiment. And " ſhould that become fatal, alas! what would become of

" me? Whither, O whither ſhall I cauſe my Shame to
" go? How can I ever forgive my ſelf? How ſhall I ever
" enjoy my ſelf more? What! ſet my hand to the taking
" away the Life of my deareſt Child, in whom my own
" Life is bound up? 'Tis true, what I do, is to preſerve
" her Life; but if it prove otherwiſe in the Event,
" where can I lay the Blame, but upon my own Raſh-
" neſs? How can I excuſe my ſelf from Blood-guiltineſs
" before God? How can I clear my ſelf from Unnatu-
" ralneſs before Men? How can I anſwer it to my own
" Conſcience, to my own Reaſon, to my own Affecti-
" ons? I can't plead Ignorance, ſince I knew beforehand
" the Experiment has been fatal to many. And what,
" tho' my Intention were good, if the Action be unwar-
" rantable? And ſurely, there muſt be ſomething of
" Guilt, ſomething of Obliquity in the Caſe. To be
" the immediate Occaſion, by means not clearly juſtifia-
" ble, of ſhedding innocent Blood, of ſhedding the Blood
" of my own Daughter, can never be reckon'd in the
" Number of thoſe Actions, of which no Account is to be
" given, can never paſs for nought in the Court of Hea-
" ven. Could I once firmly believe, or really perſuade
" my ſelf, that the Thing were lawful in it ſelf, or even
" indifferent, I might the ſooner be brought to comply:
" But by all the Light I can draw from Reaſon and Re-
" velation, I can diſcover no Allowance of any ſuch Pra-
" ctice: And while I remain unſatisfy'd, 'tis unſafe
" to venture. For I know, that *whatſoever is not of Faith*
" *is Sin*, and that we are *not* to *follow a Multitude to E-*
" *vil.* And ſhould I, with theſe Thoughts about me,
" preſume to try, and ſhould I at laſt fail of Succeſs, O
" where ſhould I flee for Succour? Where ſhould I ſeek
" for Comfort? What! wilfully and preſumptuouſly de-
" prive my ſelf of a Bleſſing, for which the whole World
" to me is not an Equivalent? And who knows what a
" mighty Bleſſing Providence may deſign this for; what
" an Inſtrument of his Glory, what an Ornament of her
" Family, of her Sex, of her Country; what a nume-

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" rous and bleſſed Iſſue is to proceed from her? And all
" this cut off at one Stroke! ---- The thought of this
" is inſupportable. If ſhe be ſeiz'd, and die of the *Small*
" *Pox* in the natural Way, this would be no other than
" the declar'd Will of God, and a direct Act of Provi-
" dence. Nor may this overtake her theſe many Years
" to come, not perhaps till I am in my Grave; not till
" ſhe her ſelf be bleſs'd with Children, not till ſhe has fi-
" niſh'd the Work that God gave her to do; and then ſhe
" may go down to the Grave in Peace. But for me to
" haſten the Diſtemper upon her before God's time, and
" to ſeek her Death by a too eager Deſire of Life, is to
" rob my ſelf of all Comforts at once, yea, to leave no
" room for Comfort or Support. When Children under
" Sickneſs, happen to miſcarry, by any Act of Careleſ-
" neſs, Miſmanagement, or Inadvertency; what Bitter-
" neſs and Sharpneſs does this infuſe into the Cup of Af-
" fliction? Parents generally, on ſuch Occaſions, grow
" reſolute in Mourning, and, *Rachel*-like, refuſe to be
" comforted; becauſe for want of timely Thought or
" Care, their Children are loſt, as they ſuppoſe, when
" they might have been ſav'd. And what then can be
" ſaid of ſuch a dangerous Attempt, and preſumptuous
" Experiment as this, if it end at laſt in Death? What
" Convulſions and Agonies muſt this needs bring upon a
" tender Parent? Yea, what Madneſs and Diſtraction?
" Nor will Conſcience be ſilent at this ſad Juncture, but
" help to encreaſe more and more the Load of Sorrow.
" And ſhall I run the riſque of ſo unwieldy a Preſſure, ſo
" inſupportable a Miſery, to avoid the Stroke of a com-
" mon Sickneſs, of a light and tolerable Affliction, in
" compariſon? On the other hand, ſhould I ſucceed in
" my Deſign, and get over this one Danger, are there no
" others as formidable left behind? Am I abſolutely
" ſure that ſhe will never be viſited with the ſame again?
" Am I ſure, that this will be a means of prolonging her
" Life? Have I not reaſon rather to dread that it may

pro-

" provoke the Divine Juſtice to ſhorten her Days, to bring " upon her ſome other grievous Diſtemper, that may cut " off the Thread of Life, and not ſuffer her to arrive at " the Age that God and Nature deſign'd her for? For can " I produce any Warrant, Right or Authority from the " Word of God, or the Light of Reaſon, for bringing a " killing Diſeaſe upon my own Child? If not, can I ex- " pect that ſuch a daring Preſumption ſhould go unpu- " niſh'd? Suppoſe the very beſt, that my Child's Life be " prolong'd by this means; do I know whether ſuch a " Prolongation will prove a Bleſſing or a Curſe to me; " whether an Advantage or a Detriment to her? I ought " to conſider likewiſe, that it may be dangerous, in one " ſenſe, to ſucceed in this Attempt: The Succeſs will " probably blind my Eyes, and hinder me from ſeeing " the Guilt of the Fact, and conſequently be a Bar to " Repentance, and expoſe me to the Danger of living " and dying in a grievous Sin. Upon the whole, may I " not properly apply on this occaſion, thoſe Words of our " Saviour, *He that ſeeketh Life, ſhall loſe it; and he that* " *loſeth* a *Life* (or is willing to loſe it) *for my ſake*, or be- " cauſe he will not act contrary to my Precepts, *the* " *ſame ſhall ſave it?* Theſe Conſiderations, I think, are " abundantly ſufficient to determine my Choice. And " why then ſhould I heſitate any longer? No; let my " Child *fall into the hands of God, and not into the hands of* " *Man*; I'll neither preſume, nor deſpair of his Mercy; " I'll neither diſtruſt, nor tempt his Providence. And " may every Parent reſolve and act the ſame. *Amen.*

FINIS.

ERRATA.

PAGE 8, line 11, read *fine Painting*; p. 14, l. 27, for *them* r. *him*; p. 16, l. 8, for *Roman* r. *known*; l. 17, for *famous* r. *glorious*; p. 21, l. 19, dele *his*; p. 24, l. 15, for *and* r. *or*; p. 30, l. 23, r. *our own*; p. 33, l. 20, for *a* r. *that*; p. 35, l. 9, for *late* r. *baſe*; p. 44, l. 5, r. *ſomewhat of*; p. 67, l. 18, r. *are as*; l. 19, dele *as*; p. 70, l. 26, r. *or vindicate*; p. 72, l. 4, dele *the*; p. 80, l. ult. r. *in Rhetorick*.

N. B. The Mſs. Copy of this Tract, which was begun ſome Years ago, having at laſt, on a particular occaſion, been drawn from the Author, and ſent in great haſte to the Preſs; the Reader is deſir'd to excuſe ſome Errors and Eſcapes, that can't well be amended by a Table of *Errata*; particularly, as to the uſual Diſtinction of *Roman* and *Italic* Characters, which is often not at all, and ſometimes not duly obſerv'd.